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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

NOVELS OF IDEAS

BY

GUDRUN BJORK GUDSTEINSDOTTIR

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

DEPARMENT OF ENGLISH

Edmonton, Alberta

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September 10, 1993

Dedication

To my mother Sigrun, my father Gudsteinn,

my husband Borkur, my children Silja and Haukur, with all my love.

Abstract

Part one of this study considers some of the theoretical implications of the resistance to ideas in literature that became particularly prominent towards and after the middle of this century, and the effect that the stigma attached to novels of ideas had upon its generic analysis; part two focuses on *Herzog* by Saul Bellow as a representative example. Chapter one reviews and critiques some works that offer definitions of novels of ideas. These definitions evidence the insufficiency of theoretical precepts based on a strict either/ or division such as traditional/ nontraditional, content/ form, intellect/ art, author/ text, reality/ fiction, and the assumption that one binary aspect does or must cancel out the other. Chapter two reviews theoretical narrative and generic approaches which do not define novels along the lines of mutually exclusive opposites. Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of novelistic dialogue in his generic theory of the novel is particularly well suited to analyzing novels of ideas. Whereas an either/or approach to novels of ideas is bound to either make their definition incomplete or make the novels themselves appear incomplete when measured against other novels, Bakhtin's theoretical premise that the novel is above all a dialogic genre establishes a basis for analysis that accommodates their defining traits in content and form. Chapter three develops a definition suited to analyzing novels of ideas by giving the outlines of a general tendency more than clear boundaries and drawing upon a variety of novels of ideas for examples.

Herzog is a particularly good example of the problems that arise in criticism on novels of ideas but it raises additional critical problems by being encyclopedic in content and form. Chapter four reviews selected criticism on *Herzog*. Chapter five focuses on Bellow's encyclopedic depiction of character and ideas; six examines his use of the grotesque to develop character and ideas; seven examines Bellow's rhetoric of form in his dialogue with the narrative tradition. *Herzog* is Bellow's reflection upon the novel as a reflection of reality and the offspring of democracy.

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A dissertation that takes longer to write than it should is bound to test the patience and support of a number of people. First of all I would like to thank my supervisor Professor Morton L. Ross for making the completion of this project possible with his encouragement, friendship, patience, assistance -- for providing sound scholarly counsel and wisdom, sharpening the edge of my blunt iron bite and keeping in check my unruly disorganized mind. The years of long distance supervision have often called for more time, effort, and emergency solutions than any supervisor should have to come up with. I would also like to express my gratitude to Professor Dale Wilkie for having now seen me through two graduate degrees, making this one not only possible but desirable by her generous assisstance with my M.A. thesis.

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According to ancient reports, my Viking ancestors received a cool welcome when they travelled abroad in search of adventure and of treasures to bring back home (some descriptions of Viking visits are a bit more crude). The Viking tradition still continues even if in somewhat different form. I am grateful to my fellow students, my instructors and other staff members at the U. of A. who made my time here not only a time of education but an adventure to treasure when I return home to Iceland.

Dear Becky, eleven years of friendship and laughter, and all kinds of escapades in between the stretches of hard work are hard to say goodbye to, so instead I'll start preparing the donkeys and the dried fish, the geezers and the soap for a visit. Thank you and Bruce for my wonderful stay with you. And thank you Becky for being there for me, as indeed before, when my nerves were on the defense.

My colleagues at the Department of English at the University of Iceland I would like to thank for their support and encouragement, and for giving me the opportunity to work in my field of interest while completing my studies. Last but not least I want to thank my family for bearing so often and for so long with a long distance family member; you are of the very first and best degree. Takk elsku Borkur, Silja, Haukur, og mamma.

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PART I: NOVELS OF IDEAS

Introduction

NOT THE SLIGHTEST IDEA!

Fictionalized examinations of ideas go back at least as far as Plato's dialogues. Yet in this century the rightful place of ideas in the English novel came to be questioned; they were to retreat from the novel, go back to where they belonged -- to philosophical tracts, the essay and other non-fictional forms.

Due to the paradigmatic shift in the novel around the turn of the century, presentation and criticism of cultural ideas as well as other aspects of narrative came under close scrutiny and reassessment in accordance with the conception of literature as an 'impersonal' and a demanding art form, rather than as a form that allowed for a personal forum on the world the authors lived in as well as the ones they created. A schism emerged in the critical conception of the novel; on the one hand it was seen as an extension of authorial reality and valuable for its content, on the other as a fictional object separate from reality and valuable as an artistic artifact. The formalist conception of the literary work as an autonomous object led to a resistance in criticism to signs of the 'author' in the text.[1] The most stringent critical demand in Anglo-American criticism for full textual autonomy was formulated by the New Critics in the late thirties and through the fifties; concern with cultural ideas gives away the consciousness behind the text, points beyond the limits of 'fiction.' The New Critics provided theoretical formulations which assumed that ideas were by nature detrimental to the artistic unity and vividness of the literary work. Defenders of ideas in the novel resisted; these voices were a defensive minority. But the trend in more recent literary theory has been towards reassessment of the ideological underpinnings of the critical formulations that led, among other things, to a suspicion of ideas in novels.

---

[1] As Margaret Atwood neatly puts it in "Tightrope-Walking over Niagra Falls," an interview conducted by Geoff Hancock in *Margaret Atwood: Conversations:* "in the novel, for a while it was the fashion not to show the author at work. Before that, it was the fashion to show the author. Now it's the fashion to show the author again" (193).

This shift in critical and theoretical attitude allows space for an assessment, long overdue, which is less concerned with attack and defence of the genre of novels of ideas as such -- an assessment of the particular manner in which this inherently dialogic genre resists strict either/or classification. Novels of ideas insist that intellect is complimentary -- not hostile -- to art, and that technical experimentation may coincide with -- not preclude -- the use of traditional methods and forms. But the controversy surrounding the genre must, nevertheless, be dealt with. The term 'novel of ideas' is neither transparent nor neutral; it carries with it historical baggage that needs to be sorted out and analyzed.

Initially this was to be a simple and straightforward analysis of the works of two novelists of ideas, but I soon discovered that there was nothing simple or straightforward about the genre itself. In my search for a neat and simple definition of a 'novel of ideas' I immediately met with unexpected obstacles. First, I discovered that handbooks on literary terms tend to have little to offer on a 'novel of ideas.' As Mary McCarthy points out in *Ideas and the Novel*, the term 'novel of ideas' is used with "assurance and frequency" but it cannot be found as an entry in handbooks such as the *Reader's Guide to Literary Terms*, although you may find an entry on 'novel of the soil' (19). Second, in the criticism that I managed to unearth on the subject, the term is often used without specifications of its exact meanings, as if it were self-explanatory. Third, when the meaning of the term 'novel of ideas' emerges clearly from the way it is used or defined by critics, the meanings that they assign to this term clash noticeably in many instances. On the one hand there is a tendency in the general usage of the term to apply it indiscriminately to all novels that deal with ideas; on the other there is a tendency to narrow it to such a degree that only a few novels belong to the genre. In the exceedingly broad sense of the word, a novel of ideas would be a direct descendant of the traditional novel as we know it from the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. In the exceedingly narrow sense of the term, a novel of ideas is an anomaly -- a departure from the tradition of the novel. The narrowing of the term is often accompanied by the complaint that many a novel undeserving of this nomination is classified as a novel of ideas. The impulse to either broaden the definition of the term to the extent that it includes the early tradition of the novel, or to narrow it so that only a handful of novels fits the description, may in part be attributed to the fourth and the least expected obstacle that I encountered in examining the genre: the hostile attitude towards the term and its connotations.

Considering that a number of novels that I have thoroughly enjoyed reading, as well as others that I could not bring myself to finish, were treated to a critical rebuff for their concern with ideas, I found the situation of the genre intriguing -- a mystery that I wanted solved. My interest shifted to the genre itself, its history, the theoretical implications of the attitude it reflects towards the relationship between ideas and literature, content and form, as well as other generic peculiarities of novels of ideas.

As background and context for the problematic position of novels that openly examine ideas, I will sketch out the shift in attitude towards ideas in literature and the emergence of the term 'novel of ideas.' The marginalization of intellect and ideas in literature in this century is vastly misrepresented in literary historical commentary on the issue and needs to be corrected. In view of the tendency to regard the novel in either/ or manner, either modernism or realism, leaving out all the modifying alternatives, it also seems essential to place novels of ideas within their context. Misrepresentation of modernism in particular has made the placement of other trends in the modern novel extremely difficult. The terminology, the generic conception, and concepts of the role of the literary work as well as the critic that were used to differentiate and marginalize openly dialectic works from those where the dialectics are implicit needs looking into. My contexualization concludes with a glimpse of the problems that arose in criticism

Hostility towards examination of accepted cultural ideas -- social and aesthetic -- is unfailingly associated with the emergence of modernism. As Ann Mary Halász points out in "The Emergence of the Discursive Novel in the Twentieth Century," reflection upon "ideas has been used by novelists since the rise of the modern novel in the eighteenth century. It seems to be a safe assumption that reflection in the novel can be traced back to the originally moralistic-didactic tinge of the genre" (113). Mary McCarthy is in no doubt about the prevalence of reflection upon ideas in the novel in her *Ideas and the Novel:*

> So intrinsic to the novelistic medium were ideas and other forms of commentary, all tending to "set" the narration in a general scheme, that it would have been impossible in former days to speak of "the novel of ideas." It would have seemed to be a tautology (18). In fact the nineteenth-century novel was so evidently an idea-carrier that the component of overt thought in it must have been taken for granted by the reader as an ingredient as predictable as a leavening agent in bread. (17)

The phrase most often quoted to support the claim that Henry James set an aesthetic trend that rejected cultural examination in the novel is T. S. Eliot's observation in "In Memory," an article which appeared in *The Little Review* in 1918, where T. S. Eliot pays tribute to James: "He had a mind so fine that no idea could violate it" (46).

McCarthy's outraged reaction to Eliot's observation on James constitutes the opening of her *Ideas and the Novel*. She blames James for having, "almost single-handed, invented a peculiar new kind of fiction, more refined, more stately, than anything known before, purged to the limit of possibility, of the gross traditional elements of suspense, physical action, inventory, description of places and persons, apostrophe, moral teaching" (5). McCarthy argues that "[t]he Jamesian model remains a standard, an archetype, against which contemporary laxities are measured" (5). She finds resistance to ideas in the novel peculiar to modernism as a whole: "What is curious, though, is that ideas are still today felt to be unsightly in the novel, whereas the nether area -- the cloaca -- are fully admitted to view. I suppose that the ban on ideas that even now largely prevails, above all in English-speaking countries, is a heritage from modernism in its prim anti-Victorian phase" (15).

Considering the fact that Eliot was most emphatic in his commentary on literature about the importance of unsettling language, using it in an indirect manner, dislocating language into meaning by force, if necessary, it seems highly suspect that McCarthy, and others who quote Eliot's comment on James, ever bothered to read Eliot's article in its entirety to check the context in which it was uttered. Out of context the sentence is extremely misleading.

James, who adopted Flaubert's use of a focalizer in his later narratives, marks the shift from "aperspectival" to "perspectival" narration in the English novel. F. K. Stanzel in *A Theory of Narrative* defines narration as "aperspectival" when "spatial perspective" and "the characters' attitudes and value judgements, especially the protagonists,'" are "hazy" or not clearly demarcated "from those of the narrator, especially the authorial narrator" (72). Narrative manipulation of time and control of perspective in relation to character were James' central concerns in his later fiction, according to his critical introductions to the 1907-09 New York edition of his collected works, collected in 1935 as *The Art of the Novel.* On the one hand James' emphasis is on the cultural aspect of literature, "the high and helpful public and, as it were, civic use of the imagination," but on the other, and more heavily, his emphasis is on aesthetic and narrative concerns (223). James' differentiation between 'telling' and 'dramatizing' is quite different from Percy Lubbock's terms 'picture' and 'drama' in *The Craft of Fiction* (1921) and altogether different from Norman Friedman's terms 'telling' and 'showing' in "Point of View in Fiction: The Development of a Critical Concept" (1955).

James addresses in particular the problem of working the characters' background, their past, into the narration without having to resort to some kind of narrative summary of past events -- "telling" tales (223). In reviewing his options for unveiling Strether's past in *The Ambassadors* James notes that he had compounded his difficulties by deciding to limit the narration to one central reflector character, that of Strether, and keep it strictly within his "compass" only (317). He points out that an easy way to uncover Strether's past would have been to make "him at once hero and historian, endow him with the romantic privilege of the 'first person' ... -- variety, and many other queer matters as well, might have been smuggled in by a back door" (320). The "looseness," the "double privilege of subject and object," and "the terrible *fluidity* of self-revelation" of first person narration did not appeal to him, however, because it does away with the character's "exposure" to the reader's "criticism"; "grimly deprived of one alternative or one substitute for 'telling,'" says James, "I must address myself tooth and nail to another" (321). The second possibility, which James also rejected, was to "make other persons tell *each other* about [Strether] -- blest resource, blest necessity, of the **drama, which reaches its effects of unity**, all remarkably, by paths **absolutely opposite to the paths of the novel**" (320, my emphasis). Finally, James was determined to stay away from traditional narrative summary; "to wave away with energy the custom of the seated mass of explanation after the fact, the inserted block of merely referential narrative, which flourishes so, to the shame of the modern impatience, on the serried page of Balzac, but which seems simply to appal our actual, our general weaker, digestion" (321). James' primary aim was to bring the past into the present through credibly depicted scenes. His solution was to introduce a character, Miss Maria Gostrey, who asks Strether pertinent questions about his past and, moreover, makes him question the values that directed his mission to the continent (322-23). As a result a dramatic tension is established between Strether's past and present, his past informing his present dilemma, and information about his past emerges naturally in dialogue as well as in his reflections, motivating the action.

A number of interdependent points relevant to later developments both in the novel and in its criticism come to the fore in James' analysis of *The Ambassadors*. First there is his emphasis on "discrimination," as he calls it, the distinction between Strether as the "subject" of the narration, viewed from within, and Strether as the "object" of the narration, viewed from without by other characters who respond to him, as well through the narrator's scenic depiction of his actions and dialogues (321). The narrative weight rests on the dialectic interaction of subject and object, James' management of point of view, rather than on either a purely objective third person or purely subjective first person narration, or "telling." Second, James' often quoted emphasis that a novelist should "dramatize" does not signify 'to imitate drama' if the context in which James puts it is considered. James' concept of "drama" in narrative refers above all to dialectic intensity, conflict, vividness, including that of incorporating the past into the present and establishing dialectic dramatic tension between the subjective and the objective. James expressly states that the means of drama to "dramatize" are "absolutely opposite" to these of the novel. Drama lacks the capacity of the novel to allow through realistic means a direct access to the characters' consciousness and development of the tension between their inner and outer reality, their past feeding into their present. Third, in James' vocabulary "telling" refers to first person narration as well as to third person.[2] And last but not least, the reasons why James dismisses pure first or third person narration in favour of a combination are highly significant: third person "telling" is not vivid enough -- too much "after the fact"; first person "telling," on the other hand, is not critical enough.

Eliot's preference for the French literary sensibility and his attitude that creative writing at its best, as in James, is the highest form of criticism are in clear evidence in "In Memory." "England," he says, "is infected" with "Ideas," whereas "in France ideas are very severely looked after; not allowed to stray, but preserved for inpsection (sic) of civic pride in a Jardin des Plantes, and frugally dispatched on occasions of public necessity" (46). According to Eliot, "James in his novels is like the best French critics in maintaining a point of view, a view-point untouched by the parasite idea" (46). The word "critic" in Eliot's article has less to do with someone who writes critical commentary on literary works but more with a literary writer who in his works takes a critical view of the world he lives in and thereby makes the reader both the object and the subject of his criticism:

---

[2] Lubbock, on the other hand, classifies first person narration as "dramatic" but adds that the narrator can only "*tell* us what he was, only *describe* his emotion" (*The Craft of Fiction* (1921; London: Jonathan Cape Ltd., 1939) 139).

> As a critic, no novelist in our language can approach James; there is not even any large part of the reading public which knows what the word "critic" means. (The usual definition of a critic is a writer who cannot "create" -- perhaps a reviewer of books). James was emphatically not a successful literary critic. His criticism of books and writers is feeble. ... Henry was not a literary critic.
>
> He was a critic who preyed not upon ideas, but upon living beings. It is criticism which is in a very high sense creative. The characters, the best of them, are each a distinct success of creation ... It is in the chemistry of these subtle substances, these curious precipitates and explosive gases which are suddenly formed by the contact of mind with mind, that James is unequalled. Compared with James's other novelists' characters seem only accidentally in the same book. Naturally, there is something more terrible, as disconcerting as quicksand, in this discovery, though it only becomes absolutely dominant in such stories as *The Turn of the Screw*. It is partly foretold in Hawthorne, but James carried it much farther. And it makes the reader, as well as the personae, uneasily the victim of a merciless clairvoyance. (46)

Eliot praises James' technical control in selecting detail and in using viewpoint to convey his criticism rather than by making explicit pronouncements and evaluations a part of the narration. Eliot grants James full hermeneutic authority -- in fact insists on it as the realization of his creative potential in criticism of manners and ideas -- and he commends him for exercising his critical authority by using viewpoint to implicate the reader in the critical activity.

Eliot maintains that James, due to his clairvoyance, is a more astute cultural critic of Americans than any of his more popular contemporaries, such as Frank Norris and O. Henry. "Americans like to be told that they are a race of commercial buccaneers," says

Eliot: "It gives them something easily escaped from, moreover, when they wish to reject America" (47). Norris and O. Henry, according to Eliot, are guilty of propagating the myth of American commercialism. James, on the other hand, more prone to inspection and alert to "occasions of public necessity," works in a different manner:

> All this show of commercialism which Americans like to present to the foreign eye James quietly waves aside; and in pouncing upon his fellow-countryman after the stock exchange has closed, in tracking down his vices and absurdities across the Atlantic, and exposing them in their highest flights of dignity or culture, James may be guilty of what will seem to most Americans scandalously improper behaviour. It is too much to expect them to be grateful. And the British public, had it been more aware, would hardly have been more comfortable confronted with a smile which was so far from breaking into the British laugh. Henry James's death, if it had been more taken note of, should have given considerable relief "on both sides of the Atlantic," and cemented the Anglo-American Entente. (47)

The Henry James that Eliot presents here is a far cry from the one McCarthy accuses of having refined the novel away from such gross elements as inventory and moral teaching; Eliot argues precisely that James takes inventory of Europe as well as America and that the reader becomes the victim of his clarity of vision.

The "continual extinction of personality" that Eliot discusses at length in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" is thus not a retreat from involvement with history, culture, ideas (73). The distinction Eliot makes between literature "infected" with ideas and literature where ideas "are severely looked after" and held up for inspection in creative criticism is remindful of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Coleridge makes a distinction between *"ideas"* and *"conceptions"* in *On the Constitution of the Church and State*. He defines an idea as "[t]hat which is contemplated ... *subjectively*" and he suggests that an idea has an *"ultimate aim"* of which a "knowledge, or sense, may very well exist, ... and powerfully influence a man's thoughts and actions, without his being competent to express it in definite words" (4). A conception, on the other hand, "*consists* in a conscious act of the understanding.... [W]e *comprehend* a thing, when we have learnt to comprise it in a known *class*" (5). Coleridge concludes: "On the other hand, it is the privilege of the few to possess an idea: of the generality of men, it might be more truly affirmed, that they are possessed by it" (5). Impersonality, in this context, is not the same as the abdication of authorial intention or authoritative hermeneutic control -- far from it; Eliot specifically points out that the elements "to which the characters" in James' fiction "pay tribute ... give only what the writer wants" (46).[3] The impersonality that Eliot emphasizes in James consists of an abdication of explicit statements of personal allegiance to, or promotion of, ideas -- an attempt to conceptualize them and thereby possess them for critical inspection -- a matter diametrically opposite to retreat from criticism of cultural ideas.[4]

James' success at possessing rather than being himself possessed with ideas is due both to a personal attribute and a literary method, according to Eliot, and is dialectic by nature. James' advantage to be "everywhere a foreigner was probably an assistance to his native wit," says Eliot, and his method was to place an American in Europe: "It is the final perfection, the consummation of an American to become, not an Englishman but a European -- something which no born European, no person of any European nationality, can become" (46, 44). This dialectic method has the advantage of serving to throw a new light on two entities at once, or as Eliot says: "We have had Birmingham seen from Chelsea, but not Chelsea seen (really *seen*) from Baden or Rome" (46). The Russian Formalists defined this literary method as defamiliarization.

---

[3] Lubbock's attitude to authorial viewpoint is also more similar to Wayne Booth's in the *The Rhetoric of Fiction* than is generally acknowledged. Lubbock presents *Madame Bovary* as a prototype for proper management of the author's hermeneutic control within the text. He makes clear that he does not favour the view that the author's interpretation and attitude towards characters and events should be banished from the text. Authorial "impersonality" in *Madame Bovary*, he insists, "only means that Flaubert does not announce his opinion in so many words, and thence it has been argued that the opinions of a really artistic writer ought not to appear in his story at all" (67). He continues: "But of course with every touch that he lays on his subject he must show what he thinks of it; his subject, indeed, the book which he finds in his selected fragment of life, is purely the representation of his view, his judgement, his opinion of it. The famous "impersonality" of Flaubert and his kind lies only in the greater tact with which they express their feelings -- dramatizing them, embodying them in living form, instead of stating them directly" (67-68).

[4] Eliot's "theory of impersonality" seems on the one hand to be a reaction to the prevalence of the kind of interpretation that he deplores in "The Function of Criticism." Maud Ellman notes in *The Poetics of Impersonality* that "one reason" why "impersonality" became "a watchword for the modernists" was "that it served to screen the poet from the prying forms of criticism which accompanied the rise of popular psychology": "Since the 1880s, readers had begun to search the text for the confessions of the author rather than the truths of the external world. As Allon White has pointed out, 'There was a direct threat in this form of attention': and poets grew furtive to defend themselves against their readers' scrutiny (Allon White, *The Uses of Obscurity: The Fiction of Early Modernism* (London: RKP, 1981) 46-47). If any indiscretions crept into their verse they could always disown them as 'impersonal'" (*The Poetics of Impersonality*, (Sussex: The Harvester Press Ltd., 1987) 5.) On the other hand, Eliot's 'impersonality' appears to tie in with "the civic use of the imagination," as James called it, or the impulse to step back and take a broad view of the accepted ideas, manners, opinions, and canons that rule in our society and hold them up for critical inspection.

Concern with dialectic narrative means that on the one hand sharpen the critical clarity of the narration and make the reader share the hermeneutic responsibility for the narrative, and that, on the other, heighten the immediacy of the narrative is central to the theoretical formulations of other early modernists as well. Kenneth Young, in *Ford Madox Ford* in the Writers and Their Work series, quotes Ford's discussions of the advantages Ford and Joseph Conrad saw in their collaboration around the turn of the century upon the aesthetics that filtered from France through James. Young notes that the objective Ford mentions in *The English Novel* as primary in deemphasizing the sense of authorial presence was to get the reader "'hypnotized into thinking that he was living what he read -- or, at least, into the conviction that he was listening to a simple and in no way brilliant narrator who was telling -- not writing -- a true story. ... Into that live scene you could then drop the piece of news that you wanted to convey ...'" (14). And by breaking up chronological time sequence as well as layering the narrative viewpoint by enclosing narrative within narrative, added narrative energy, a broader scope "'of the world,'" and critical clarity were gained, according to Ford, comparable to the added volume of "two men standing together in a field," "'shout[ing] simultaneously'" instead of "'separately'" (14). Young notes that Ford explains in *The March of Literature:* "'The juxtaposition of the composed renderings of two or more unexaggerated actions or situations may be used to establish, like the juxtaposition of a vital word to a vital word, a sort of fictional current of electric life that will galvanize the work of art'" (14).

The term 'novel of ideas' seems to have emerged out of this kind of emphasis on the potential that perspectival narration, achronological narrative sequencing, and narrative layering offered for critical analysis of cultural ideas, as opposed to promotion of a specific ideology. Joseph Warren Beach, in *The Twentieth-Century Novel*, demonstrates the similarity between André Gide's works and Aldous Huxley's *Point Counter Point* and suggests that some of its striking similarities are Huxley's "reminiscences of Gide" (458). In "The Novel of Ideas," an article on *The Counterfeiters*, Georges I. Brachfeld points out:

> the pervading theme of the novel is authenticity. ... The symbol at the center of this novel is the false coin. This false coin, however, appears only incidentally at the center of the novel and briefly thereafter. Obviously, the yellow glass token, like the clothes in Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, is merely a pretext, in this case a pretext for symbolic variations on monetary themes. ... In Gide's book, the symbol is webbed into a parable, a simple tale fraught with a universal moral lesson and affording broad interpretations. People and events in *The Counterfeiters* are exemplifications of this parable. (166)

In *The Counterfeiters* Gide presents thesis novels as counterfeit novels of ideas. Beach quotes *The Counterfeiters* where Edouard says: "'Because clumsy writers have gone astray, why need we condemn the novel of ideas [*le roman d'idées*? Under the guise of novels of ideas, they have served us, up to the present, nothing but execrable problem novels [*romans á theses*]. But that is not what I have in mind, you may be sure'" (459-60). Concern with false values, central to *The Counterfeiters*, central to *Point Counter Point*, is peculiar to the genre of novels of ideas. The emphasis may be on the comic discrepancies between professed or altogether impractical ideas and actuality, as in Thomas Love Peacock's novels, or on the harmful effects of false values, as in *Point Counter Point*.

Novels of ideas do not seem to have been demarcated from other novels in English until Huxley introduced the term apparently as a translation of the French *'roman d'idées'* in *The Counterfeiters* and the context in which he presents it undoubtedly had quite a lot to do with later distrust of the genre. In his baring of the generic devices he uses in *Point Counter Point*, Huxley undermines his own narrative construct with irony. His protagonist Philip Quarles writes in his note-book:

> Novel of ideas. The character of each personage must be implied, as far as possible, in the ideas of which he is the mouthpiece. In so far as theories are rationalizations of sentiments, instincts, dispositions of soul, this is feasible. The chief defect of the novel of ideas is that you must write about people who have ideas to express -- which excludes all but about .01 per cent. of the human race.[5] Hence the real, the congenital novelists don't write such books. But then, I never pretended to be a congenital novelist.

Quarles' definition of contrapuntal narrative development raises the same kind of unease:

> The musicalization of fiction. Not in the symbolist way, by subordinating sense to sound. ... But on a large scale, in the construction. ... The changes of moods, the abrupt transitions. ... More interesting still, the modulations, not merely from one key to another, but from mood to mood. A theme is stated, then developed, pushed out of shape, imperceptibly deformed, until, though still recognizably the same, it has become quite different. In sets of variations the process is carried a step further. Those incredible Diabelli variations, for example. The whole range of thought and

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[5] Quarles' observation upon the scarcity of people who have ideas to express is strongly remindful of Coleridge's above but put forth so provocatively that it cannot but offend those who see it as élitist, as well as those who would like to but are not certain they belong to the .01 percent. Lionel Trilling says much the same in "The Meaning of a Literary Idea" in *The Liberal Imagination*, but again without the offensive overtones of the novel: "to call ourselves the people of the idea is to flatter ourselves. We are rather the people of ideology, which is a very different thing" (286).

> feeling, yet all in organic relation to a ridiculous little waltz tune. ... All you need is a sufficiency of characters and parallel, contrapuntal plots.

In view of Quarles' generic analysis as it applies to *Point Counter Point* and the way Huxley undermines Quarles with sharp irony, the excitement generated in the twenties by Huxley's revival of an old narrative tradition by modern narrative means and experimentation may seem more surprising than the eventual negative backlash.

The topicality of the ideas and the narrative methods Huxley uses in *Point Counter Point* is lost to readers who read it today. Jocelyn Brooke explains in 1954 in *Aldous Huxley* in the Writers and Their Work series:

> Huxley was [ ] a popularizer, not only of aesthetic and philosophic, but also (like Wells) of scientific ideas; he too -- though in a somewhat different sense -- was both a revolutionary and a prophetic writer; and, most notably, he was, like Wells before him, the 'typical' writer of his generation, and a major influence upon the young intelligentzia of his time.
>
> His importance, in this last respect, can hardly be exaggerated, though there is a very natural tendency, among the youngest generation, to underestimate it. For those who, like the writer of the present essay, were growing up during the 1920's, Aldous Huxley seemed unquestionably the most stimulating and exciting writer of the day: his style in itself was a novelty -- highly-wrought yet extremely readable, deriving from unfamiliar models, and providing a refreshing contrast to that of such older writers as Galsworthy, Bennett, and Wells himself. Huxley was gay, sophisticated and (for those days) agreeably shocking; but more important, for his younger readers, was the impact of an alert, penetrating and widely-ranging intelligence. By comparison, most other contemporary writers seemed stuffy, unenlightened and old fashioned.

> The effect was intoxicating: like the great Knockespotch, that imaginary genius described in *Chrome Yellow*, Huxley had 'delivered us from the tyranny of the realistic novel'; like Knockespotch, again, he preferred to study the human mind, not bogged in a social plenum', but 'freely and sportively bombinating'.... (6)

Very likely Huxley's depiction of intellectuals and artists engaged in deep discussions at restaurants and parties also lent bohemian glamour to the figure of the intellectual.

Huxley's being the first English definition of novels of ideas, it also tends to be regarded as the authoritative definition and the living proof of "the dangers of the novel of ideas," as Beach puts it in his study in 1932 of *The Twentieth-Century Novel* (460). The faults Beach finds with *Point Counter Point* are that the characters are not realistic, the protagonist is actually Huxley the author who *tells* the reader what he should depict in scenes:

> the main objection to this kind of novel, in which each character is chosen to stand for something in the world of ideas ... is that the characters are doomed in advance to be mechanical and artificial. They run the danger, pointed out by Gide, of seeming the creations of the author rather than life.... Our main quarrel is with the author who makes his personal appearance a *substitute* for the artistic presentation of his subject, thinking that talking about the subject is equivalent to presenting it. (466, 468)

If a novel's merit may be measured by the willingness of people to read them after they have lost their topicality and after their narrative innovations have been thoroughly assimilated into the genre as a whole so that their initial shock effects have been erased, *Point Counter Point*, still in circulation, still reprinted, must have greater power to move than Beach grants it. *Point Counter Point* is a novel. Few people will bother to read Huxley's various essays that deal with the very same ideas as his novel (except academics and students for background), although happy to read the novel itself. If the ideas had significance in themselves, independent of character and development of action, *Point Counter Point* would be a rather unhelpful treatise; a historical survey of ideas would be far more succinct.

As a handbook on its own literary devices, *Point Counter Point* also raises problems. Quarles' various definitions stated in the novel are not only confirmed but also modified and refracted by the novel itself. *Point Counter Point* is tragic and the roots of the tragedy as developed in the novel are: too little regard for emotion and instinct, and overemphasis upon intellect, intellectual solutions, intellectual formulations, intellectual rationalizations of instincts, emotions, temperament. Huxley recasts the Faustian theme of man's sacrifice of his humanity for intellectual rewards in the context of contemporary thought and its roots, and even if the ideas that motivate the action have lost their immediacy today, their inscription upon the narrative, into the very fabric of the narrative, still maintains their universal applicability and make the novel readable, gripping. Huxley's definition of novels of ideas in *Point Counter Point* cannot be taken at face value only, any more than James Joyce's definition of impersonal narrative in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Moreover, each novelist who contributes to the genre keeps the genre alive and changing. More recent novelists who have added colour to the genre of novels of ideas in English include: Margaret Atwood, Fay Weldon, Doris Lessing, Erica Jong, Iris Murdoch, Saul Bellow, Robert M. Pirsig, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., John Barth, David Lodge, Robertson Davies, Hugh McLennan, Timothy Findley, to name a few.

Beach classifies Huxley as one of "the 'modernists'" (546). He notes the reluctance of the general reading public to accept many of the modernist writers and implies that the contemporary popularity of Woolf and Huxley is suspect: "most readers are likely to be repelled by the psychopathic studies of Joyce, Frank, Lawrence, Faulkner. Insanity they will tolerate in Virginia Woolf because it is not too realistic; and all kinds of perversions in Aldous Huxley because he is so 'intellectual'" (546). The features Beach finds typical for modernism are excessive intellectuality, narrative methods that make the reading difficult, nihilism, subjective aestheticism, abnormal psychology, and "corrosive criticism of old ideals, as … in Joyce, in Butler, Dreiser, Lewis, Huxley, Hemingway, Faulkner" (548-49). Beach finds "ruthlessness" in the modern English novel -- misses the "humaneness" of "certain Continental writers like Knut Hamsun and Thomas Mann" -- and hopes for "a closer connection between thought and action" in the future (549). Concerns similar to Beach's may be seen in the writings of F. R. and Q. D. Leavis. Margaret Atwood has a pertinent response to such concerns in "Using What You're Given," an interview by Jo Brans in *Margaret Atwood: Conversations*, where she explains that her poem "Power Politics" "talks about all kinds of different ways in which marriage isn't happy" because: "You may often define a positive by defining negatives" (142). Lionel Trilling observes in "The Meaning of a Literary Idea," in *The Liberal Imagination:*

> It is [ ] no wonder that any critical theory that conceives itself to be at the service of the emotions, and of life itself, should turn a very strict and jealous gaze upon an intimate relationship between literature and ideas, for in our culture ideas tend to deteriorate into ideology. And indeed it is scarcely surprising that criticism, in its zeal to protect literature and life from the tyranny of the rational intellect, should misinterpret the relationship. (286)

Modernist novels and novels of ideas alike deviate from traditional or social realism by appearing constructed and by focusing more heavily upon thought than upon action, as Beach points out. Because novels of ideas tend to be classified either as modernist texts or as deviant or mismanaged realist texts, the relationship between modernism and realism must be established before novels of ideas can be placed within their context.

In his comprehensive reassessment of the critical mutations of the concept 'modernism' in *The Concept of Modernism*, Astradur Eysteinsson calls attention to a number of things that are elemental if the term is to relate to the actual works they are intended to define. Eysteinsson points out two prevalent tendencies that have adversely affected theoretical formulations of modernism. First of all Eysteinsson notes that the term 'modernism' has been used to refer to a specific time and situation in history and he sees "the debate about modernism as a *struggle* over the *meaning* of significant changes that most critics recognize, starting in the latter half of the nineteenth century, but reaching an explosive stage in the first three decades of the twentieth" (5-6). He continues:

> The changes that can be observed in modernist aesthetics, the disruptions and breaks with tradition that it seems to call for, do not directly *reflect* social modernity or lend us an immediate access to its distinctive qualities. Most os us do not experience modernity as a mode of disruption.... I find it more to the point to see modernism as an attempt to *interrupt* the modernity that we live and understand as a social, if not "normal," way of life. (6)

The most fruitful way of looking at the interrelations between realism and modernism, Eysteinsson suggests, is to see "[r]ealism" as "a key term that in various ways highlights the social background against which modernism receives its significance as a 'negative' practice, or as a poetics of the nonorganic text" (5). *Mimesis* in the sense of imitation of reality also fails to describe the way novels of ideas function; first of all they tend to *reflect upon* the capacity of either or both contemporary ideological trends and contemporary literary trends to reflect or imitate human reality, secondly they aim to *interrupt* correspondences perceived as falsifications of reality and the narrative tradition.

A second assumption that Eysteinsson challenges is that modernism is:

> the ideal example of New Critical tenets and of the New Critical view of the poem based on internal tensions that perhaps remain unresolved but nonetheless do not disturb the autonomy of the work. Indeed when critics use the term "modernist criticism" they often seem to be referring to New Criticism, and they appear unaware that there need be no "natural" connection between modernist works and this particular critical or analytical paradigm.

> To this day, however, critics persist in reading modernism through the spectacles of New Criticism. Recently this tendency has been apparent in the discussion surrounding postmodernism … which is frequently seen as rejecting *this particular kind* of "modernism," together with the aesthetics of the organic, unified, autonomous and "pure" work of art (11).

Terminology based upon New Critical precepts have likewise been persistently used to displace and devaluate novels of ideas, channelling critical discussion towards the question whether they classify as novels instead of how they function as novels.

In hindsight the limitations of the New Critical construct for literary analysis seem obvious but the initial intentions were to make a concentrated effort to bring literary aesthetics and criticism up to date. The New Critics, led by John Crowe Ransom, provided theoretical formulations that not only helped to allay concerns with the intellectual emphasis in modernist works and their constructedness, but made these features signs of literary merit. John Crowe Ransom outlined the desirable objectives for a new kind of criticism in "Criticism, Inc.," first published in the *Virginia Quarterly Review* in 1937 (collected in *20th Century Literary Criticism).* Ransom argues that if criticism is to escape amateurism it must be "scientific, or precise and systematic" and "that its proper seat is in the universities" (229). The primary aim that Ransom envisioned for the New Criticism was to discover "the devices" in poetry which are "its means of escaping prose" -- "the laws of prose logic, its superfluity; and I would even say, its irrelevance" (238). Ransom argues that the distinguishing feature of poetry is its capacity to resist or control the prosaic "universal object" which may be discovered "by an immediate paraphrase; ... a kind of story, character, thing, scene, or moral principle" but is kept "from coming out of the poetic object" (238). He concludes that "the critique of fiction, or of the non literary arts" may similarly be applied to discover the writer's "weakness for lapsing into some special form of prosy or scientific bondage" (238).

Opposition to competing critical approaches seems to have shaped New Criticism considerably and severely affected its capacity to do justice to the very thing it set out to accommodate: modernism. Ransom's "Criticism, Inc." indicates that the New Critical avoidance of history both in critical practice and in critical constructs was largely due to the dominance of "historical studies" in the teaching of English literature and to the feeling that the historical perspective failed to account for contemporary works: "Here is contemporary literature, waiting for its criticism; where are the professors of literature?" (233). Ransom commends Ronald S. Crane's rejection of "historical scholarship and Neo-Humanism" in "Criticism, Inc." but his list of critical approaches and practices that the scholarly critic is to avoid was eventually to differentiate New Criticism from the Chicago School as well as other critical approaches contending for supremacy in modern literary criticism.[6]

Out of all the contemporary contenders for the crown in the coronation of the Scholarly Expert on English Literature, New Criticism emerged the victor. M. H. Abrams points out in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* that the textbook *Understanding Poetry* by Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, first published in 1938, "did much to make the New Criticism the reigning point of view in American colleges, and even in high schools, for two or three decades" (223). *Understanding Poetry* and *Understanding Fiction* (1943) trained students at an early age in reading literature in a specific way, and, as a result, these textbooks shaped the expectations they brought to the novel as a genre. *Understanding Poetry* presents dramatization, intensity, and action as ends in themselves, not only in poetry but in prose as well.[7]

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[6] These are the areas that Ransom specifies should be avoided: "1. ... the effect of the art-work upon the critic as reader. ... 2. Synopsis and paraphrase. ... 3. Historical studies. ... 4. Linguistic studies. ... 5. Moral studies. ... 6. Any other special studies which deal with some abstract or prose content taken out of the work" (235-36). Wimsatt attacked genre studies specifically in "The Chicago Critics" which appeared in *Comparative Literature* in 1953, collected in *The Verbal Icon*. The articles in *The Verbal Icon* are aimed precisely at demonstrating how literary criticism must divorce itself from concern with history, biography, genre, morals, general aesthetics, etc., if it is to fulfill the aim of offering empirical analysis of the purely "literary."

[7] In their "Glossary" to *Understanding Poetry* Brooks and Warren explain that the reason why "frequent reference has been made to the means by which a poet may dramatize his theme" in the analytical drills that accompany the poems is the "fact that a drama presents its materials concretely and through action" and that

W. K. Wimsatt's term the "concrete universal," to indicate the relationship between the individual and the universal, which he applies to character as well as metaphor and simile in *The Verbal Icon*, aptly captures the priorities that New Criticism imprinted upon the criticism and theory of modern literature. Only by cancelling out the middle ground -- the cultural, the historical, as a component that relates to and modifies both the individual and the universal -- can complete autonomy be established. The student and the scholar are provided with stable points for measuring the aesthetic quality of the literary object; texts that include parts or devices which undermine their autonomy can be exposed as not having realized the unity that they are to concretize. Texts that admit in some way of cultural criticism are obviously difficult to fit within the critical framework of New Criticism without violating one or more of the terms it sets for aesthetic realization. Concreteness is the distinguishing trait of New Criticism as well as unshakable faith that New Critical methods are universally applicable, as Brooks insists in "A Retrospective Introduction," added in 1965 to his *Modern Poetry & the Tradition*, first published in 1939. An obvious reason why New Critical methods enjoyed such immediate and widespread success is that the approach is convenient for educational purposes because it provides an effective analytical grid.[8] Once the text is seen as autonomous, it has manageable boundaries and refers only to itself. And because of "the way in which one part of a poem relates to another and is made to contribute to the unity of the whole," as Brooks puts it in "A

"poetry tends to present its themes in the same manner, not abstractly" (553). They point out: "Abstractions are qualities and characteristics isolated as pure ideas. (The word is derived from the Latin *abstractus*, which means literally 'drawn away from': thus an abstraction is a quality or idea considered apart from the thing or situation in which it inheres.... *[C]oncrete* is derived from the Latin *concretus* which means "grown together." The fundamental method of literature is to present a subject concretely -- not abstractly. It depends, therefore, rather heavily upon implication rather than upon explicit statement. ... It presents individual human beings and presents them in action" (551). The emphasis on the association between distance and ideas is significant and even more significant are the implications that distance is to be avoided and that action is the only means for presenting a subject concretely.

[8] The authority of New Criticism is evident, for instance, when David Lodge recalls in *After Bakhtin* that "in the 1960s in England and America th[e] task [of designing theory] was seen as very much a matter of bringing novel criticism up to a level of formal sophistication comparable to that achieved by the New Criticism (from, say William Empson to W. K. Wimsatt) in relation to poetry" (11).

Retrospective Introduction," each part can be examined in isolation as a contribution to the whole, the *pars pro toto* methods making the critical task even more manageable (xii).[9]

As well as being hermetic, New Criticism is inherently ageneric. The lyric poem provides the analytical premise for all genres, yet drama, according to New Criticism, is the defining feature of drama, narrative, and poetry; prose is something that needs to be escaped from. In "The Point of View in Fiction" Norman Friedman applies these assumptions to order in "a logical sequence" categories of "the narrator['s] … adequate transmission of the story to the reader"; "since, further, our major distinction is between 'telling' and 'showing,' the sequence of our answers should proceed by degrees from the one extreme to the other: from statement to inference, from exposition to presentation, from narrative to drama, from explicit to implicit, from idea to image" (152). At the bottom of the ladder of narrative adequacy is "telling" or "Editorial" and "Neutral Omniscience." In "Editorial Omniscience" "the author will not only *report* what goes on in the minds of his characters, but he will also *criticize* it";

> ["Neutral Omniscience"] differs from Editorial Omniscience only in the absence of direct authorial intrusions (the author speaks impersonally in the third person).… The absence of intrusions does not imply, however that the author denies himself a voice when using the Neutral omniscience frame: such people as Mark Rampion and Philip Quarles in *Point Counter Point* are obviously projections of one or another of Huxley's own attitudes (at that time), as we know from external evidence, even if Huxley never editorializes in his own voice. (156)

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[9] Lubbock heavily emphasizes the difficulties of attempting formal analysis of something as massive and detailed as a novel and candidly explains his own critical preference for works that have a tight stuctural unity and do not point explicitly beyond themselves to historical reality: "Flaubert has only one word to say, and it is impossible to find more than a single meaning in it. He establishes accordingly a point in the sphere of criticism, a point which is convenient to us all; we can refer to it at any time, in the full assurance that its position is the same in everybody's view; he provides the critic with a motionless pole" (60).

Another example of "Neutral Omniscience" is a passage from Hardy's *Tess* which Friedman first quotes and then rewrites to show the advantages gained if narrated from Tess' perspective. Hardy: "'He had an almost swarthy complexion...'"; Friedman: "*She noticed* his swarthy complexion..." (156-57). According to Friedman's categorization, *Point Counter Point*, although perspectival, is as aperspectival as *Tess* if you keep in mind that in both instances "the author is always ready to intervene himself between the reader and the story..." (157). "Our progress toward direct presentation" proceeds through "'I' as Witness" and "Protagonist," "Multiple Selective" and "Selective Omniscience," to the pure "showing" of "The Dramatic Mode," and "The Camera" (157-63). "Telling" in the sense Friedman defines it by superimposing Ransom's idea of the escape from prose upon Lubbock's analytical framework has been a term frequently used to indicate the inadequacy of novels that demonstrate a critical interest in the ideology of culture and literary form.

By making drama the defining feature of modern poetry and prose, the Anglo-American formalists, from Lubbock through New Criticism, devaluated not only novels of ideas but all the lively generic experimentation at the time. Joyce's *Ulysses* is an encyclopedia of forms, stretching the fabric of the novel to include drama, poetry, romance, epic. Woolf tested the novel's capacity to approximate a poem in *The Waves*. Tennessee Williams tested the capacity of a play to break the boundaries between drama and narrative in *The Glass Menagerie*. Generic restrictions were being tested in a variety of ways, between poetry and prose, poetry and drama, narrative and drama. Instead of keeping an admiring eye on the energetic and daring testing and dismantling of generic and linguistic boundaries, formalism either ignored or levelled out these departures so they seemed the norm. The energy of criticism, on the other hand, seemed to go into erecting boundaries where none existed before.

Although 'telling' has been the main stamp of disapproval on novels that enter a critical dialogue with cultural ideas, it has the weakness of combining reference to two somewhat disparate entities, narrative perspective and authorial intention. The concept of

"The Intentional Fallacy" that W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley first defined in their article in *The Sewanee Review* in the late forties (collected in *The Verbal Icon* in 1954) has proved much more powerful. Authors prove to be a difficult lot to control by restrictive definitions; they are likely to make a concentrated effort to flaunt their defiance of constructs such as fictional autonomy. The intentional fallacy is a concept that primarily appeals to critics; authors may do what they please but as long as the critic ignores what their intentions are, the author's work is the only proof that he had any intentions. Wimsatt and Beardsley are altogether right in pointing out that attempts to divine an author's intention before or at the time of writing is silly and futile. But there is another way of looking at authorial intention. All writing, literary writing there included, has intention. In literature these intentions are 'named' by literary terms. Swift's "A Modest Proposal" has an altogether different inscription of authorial intention than Woolf's "Kew Gardens." We can name the different intentions by different means, describe one as satire or cultural criticism intended to shock the reader into giving due concern to the urgency of a certain situation and to consider the alternatives mentioned in the negative; the other shows the intention of depicting a slice of life, the use of the perspective of a camera eye, or to render a lyrical evocation of Kew Gardens. All of these intentions are inscribed upon the narratives, just like absurd theatre, comedy, tragedy make known their different intent. Much of our literary vocabulary names authorial intentions.

But as Wimsatt and Beardsley make clear in their article, there are certain intentions in particular that are to go unnamed and unnoted: dialogue with history, with the literary tradition, with different cultural paradigms. Wimsatt and Beardsley conclude their article on the intentional fallacy by taking Eliot to task for his use of "unassimilated material lying loose beside the poem, necessary for the meaning of the verbal symbol, but not integrated, so that the symbol stands incomplete" (16). According to them the proper way to look at Eliot's footnotes is to see them as "external indexes to the author's *intention*"*;* a reader's consideration of Donne in connection to the mermaids in "Prufrock" "is without significance and is better not thought of, or the method may have the disadvantage of providing no certain conclusion" (16, 18). Eliot's dialogue with other ages of poetry, in particular the Metaphysical poets and their ideal as well as actualization of totality of being -- full integration of all faculties -- is to be ignored? I. A. Richards observes in *Principles of Literary Criticism* that "the most characteristic feature of Mr. Eliot's technique" might be described "in three words": "'music of ideas'" (233). Richards maintains that readers who find the intellectual activity in Eliot's poems an obstacle to their enjoyment have not been reading them properly, because they have failed to allow themselves to be carried along with the emotional and imaginative power of his "'music of ideas.'" Richards' response of course belongs to "The Affective Fallacy," a tendency of his which Wimsatt and Beardsley treat at length in an article from the late forties, also collected in *The Verbal Icon.*[10] Until Mikhail M. Bakhtin's generic theory became known in English literary theory and criticism, the intentional fallacy was most pointedly challenged by social realists whose slant on authorial intention serves well to deal with thesis novels. Bakhtin's definition of authorial intention as imbedded in both content and form is more compatible with examinations of novels of ideas.

In my own analysis later in this study I assume that authorial intention is a highly important part of the signification of novels of ideas, inscribed upon the narrative features and organizational management of the text. Wimsatt and Beardsley's own intentions need looking into. Their two fallacies are constructs intended for **evaluation** of literary works against certain predefined standards. I fully agree with them when they say: "that the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for **judging the success** of a work of literary art …" (3, my emphasis). I cannot argue with: "A poem does not come into existence by accident. The words of a poem … come out of a head, not out of a hat. Yet to insist on the designing intellect as a *cause* of a poem is not to grant the design or intention as a *standard* by which the critic is to judge the **worth** of the poet's performance" (4, bold emphasis mine). I have some reservations about: "It is only because an artifact works that we infer the intention of an artificer" (4). Comedy that puts people to sleep and tragedy that makes them laugh, like Mac Flecknoe's, may not work as intended but have an inscription of intention clear enough to be recognized, even if ignored; otherwise the audience would not know that they were laughing at tragedy. As regards the affective fallacy, I will certainly agree that Barbara Cartland's emotional appeal, for instance, rates higher in dollars than in literary **worth**. Granted, literary criticism is an act of evaluation, but rating literary works as if they were body-builders or beauty queens (where good intentions do not rate either) is surely not all that criticism entails. Much like Wimsatt and Beardsley's intentions are boldly inscribed upon their critical artifact, both their intention to up the standards of criticism by insisting that standards cannot be measured by intention or emotion, and their intentions to silence critical opponents they disagree with as well as stifle literary practices they do not favour.

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[10] The final irony is that in *The New Criticism* John Crowe Ransom managed to claim Eliot and Richards as New Critics. This myth is repeated in both handbooks on literature and in criticism although both Ransom's text and the writings of Wimsatt and Beardsley amply demonstrate how incompatible they are. Eliot says in "The Function of Criticism": "I have assumed as axiomatic that a creation, a work of art, is, autotelic; and that criticism, by definition, is *about* something other than itself" (82). Eliot's practice of using explanatory notes minimizes the need for reading beyond the poem itself. Ransom says in *The New Criticism:* "Eliot's critical taste was fastidious -- in his own words it was 'classicist,'" but "[h]e talked about poetry as *autotelic*" (137-38). This one word, autotely, makes Eliot a New Critic. Ransom speaks highly of the excellency of Eliot's writing and critical fairness, but finds no New merit in his historical criticism when it comes to the crunch. He also rejects the psychological and ethical basis of I. A. Richards' criticism as "confusions," accepting only his "scientific" approach to literature as New Critical: "The new criticism very nearly began with him" (3). Yvor Winters "is a victim of the moralistic illusion," says Ransom, "but independently of that" he excels at "criticism of the structural properties of poetry" (xi). After reading Ransom's detailed demonstration of the "drags" from which the New "critics" should be "unburdened," keeping in mind that these drags are the very foundations for the critics he discusses and appropriates as New Critics, it is tempting to draw the conclusion that Eliot's "spectacular success" and the critical authority of the others are the main reasons why Ransom claims them, in afterthought, as the founders of New Criticism (136).

My own intention is to take a closer look at a genre that was for a good while stifled in literary criticism and theory but not in literary practice. Practitioners of the genre of novels of ideas in English do not find themselves in an enviable position. First of all readers are likely not to recognize the genre. Doris Lessing says in an author's preface that she added to *The Golden Notebook* ten years after its initial publication in 1962 that "there is no doubt that to attempt a novel of ideas is to give oneself a handicap …" (14). She complains that her contemporaries failed to recognize that *The Golden Notebook* is a novel of ideas. Lessing expected the rhetoric of the form of *The Golden Notebook* to be recognized as a rejection of the tendency to regard the novel in mutually exclusive terms, as a rejection "of false dichotomies and divisions"; she expected her formal argumentation in favour of a more wholistic and flexible conception of the self and the novel to be recognized by her narrative signals of *The Golden Notebook's* generic placement (8). When the author's generic inscription is not recognized by readers, an important part of her means to signal intention is lost or ignored. Lessing spells out her own intentions in the introduction but she also spells them out in her narrative. Yet the failure of critics and reviewers to acknowledge Lessing's intentions does not preclude the possibility that they read them correctly.

The formalist emphasis in Anglo-American criticism encouraged a clear schism between novelistic theory and practice. David Lodge is a case in point. As a novelist he has consistently inscribed upon his texts his intention to examine the cultural and historical implications of ideas; meanwhile, ironically, he pursued poetics that either ignored or denied authorial intention and "downgraded" "the specifically narrative elements in a text," as he puts it in *After Bakhtin* (5). Lodge candidly admits his own implication in his writings on narrative poetics in establishing and maintaining a divide between the poetics and the practice of narrative discourse, and explains that it arose from his early training in "the Anglo-American New Criticism" (5). *After Bakhtin* is obviously intended to make amends, bridge the gap, and raise questions that are particularly pressing for someone like him who has "a foot in both camps" (7). Lodge finds that the first steps towards giving narrativity due consideration were taken by the Russian Formalists and developed further by the French structuralists in the sixties and the seventies. But the writings of Mikhail M. Bakhtin closed the chasm between his creative and critical practices in the novel, on the one hand, and in his writing as a literary scholar, on the other by reaffirming "the writer's creative and communicative power. This is an idea that structuralism (implicitly), and post-structuralism (explicitly) have sought to discredit and replace with theories about the autonomous productivity of texts and their readers" (7). Like Eysteinsson, Lodge questions the accepted view of modernism established by New Criticism and calls attention to the need for reassessments. Lodge expresses the view that literary theory and criticism has continued to divorce itself from literature and reality, failing to reconsider the canon of English literature, failing to pay attention to contemporary works, failing to make sense to the general public and authors who are not academics themselves: "Critics these days are too busy keeping up with each other's work" (14). Lodge's impatience is understandable and *After Bakhtin* is at least in part an authorial apologue calling attention to the neglected trend in the English novel that he represents along with authors such as Lessing and Weldon.

But Lodge also gives a clear idea of the reason why authors tacitly and actively participate in the creation of the myth that modern novels have nothing to do with reality and that the author's contribution to a novel is solely a matter of rearranging the already written collective text, represented respectively by Paul de Man in *Blindness and Insight* and Roland Barthes in "The Death of the Author," both of whom he quotes. Lodge stresses that "as a novelist" he cannot but "contest [ ] remarks" insisting that he has no personal "responsibility" for his works, that they do not belong to his "past," that he has nothing at stake in them, and that they do not correspond to reality: "if my readers did not recognize in my novels some truths about the real behaviour of, say, academics or Roman Catholics, I should feel I had failed, and so would my readers" (15). Lodge notes a number of examples where the reality of the novelist feeds into his writing and points out that Joyce

> boasted that if Dublin were to be destroyed it could be reconstructed from his books, yet at the same time he made large implicit and explicit claims for the timeless and universal significance of those narratives. Novelists are and always have been split between, on the one hand, the desire to claim an

> imaginative and representative truth for their stories, and on the other to guarantee and defend that truth claim by reference to empirical facts. (18)

As Lodge notes, the emphasis on the author in the media, in reviews of new writing, and amongst the general public, as well as the "determination" of even "the most committed post-structuralists" to read his "novels as *romans à clef*" make "the extreme formulations of Barthes and de Man about the impersonality of the author and fictiveness of literary discourse begin to look attractive" (18).

Perhaps because my own academic training, like Lodge's, has been shaped considerably by formalist practices, I find little appeal in using the text simply as a pretext for scrutinizing and dissecting the author. But if the intentions inscribed upon novels of ideas are to be given due consideration, it is necessary to take into account the historical and literary situation at the time each novel was written because the author's response is recorded in the text. In my analysis I do not address the ideas in novels of ideas as a philosopher or a historian of ideas would; my interest is primarily in the way the rhetoric in novels of ideas affects their form and in their use of form as a part of their rhetoric.

The peculiarity of novels of ideas is that they defy the strict dichotomy that is often set up between traditional novels and modernist novels. They are posited on the margin between the traditional novel and the novel that departs from tradition in technique and form; playing the conventions of the one against the other, novels of ideas partake of both, offering neither in its pure form. In part one of my study I will consider some of the theoretical implications of the resistance to ideas in literature that became particularly prominent towards and after the middle of this century, and the effect that the stigma attached to novels of ideas had upon its generic analysis. In chapter one I will review and critique some works that offer definitions of novels of ideas. These definitions are affected by theoretical approaches that show novels of ideas at a disadvantage and illustrate how limited and limiting these approaches are when applied to novels of ideas. The various analyses offer valuable insight into the generic aspects of novels of ideas. But they also evidence the insufficiency of theoretical precepts based on a strict either/ or division such as traditional/ nontraditional, content/ form, intellect/ art, author/ text, reality/ fiction, and the assumption that one binary aspect does or must cancel out the other. In chapter two I will consider theoretical approaches which do not define novels along the lines of mutually exclusive opposites, or by the selection and the exclusion of specific kinds of novels, or by defining the novel in dramatic terms. These studies aim primarily to define the basic peculiarities that set narrative or the novel apart from other literary forms or genres and emphasize that narration, 'telling', speech, sets the novel apart from lyric, drama, and epic. Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of novelistic dialogue in his generic theory of the novel is particularly well suited to analyzing novels of ideas. Whereas an either/or approach to novels of ideas is bound to either make their definition incomplete or make the novels themselves appear incomplete when measured against other novels, Bakhtin's theoretical premise that the novel is above all a dialogic genre establishes a basis for analysis that accommodates their defining traits in content and form. In chapter three I will develop a definition suited to analyzing novels of ideas, drawing primarily upon the studies discussed in the preceding chapters. And, as with any definition, it will give the outlines of a general tendency more than clear boundaries. I will trace the characteristics of the genre itself as well as of the formal devices that have proved to be most effective for polemical examinations of ideas in the novel. In my analysis I will draw upon a variety of novels of ideas.

Part two is a more detailed examination of *Herzog* by Saul Bellow. In *Herzog* Bellow makes clear his concern with trends in contemporary ideas and he uses the form of the novel in the manner of a novel of ideas. When *Herzog* is examined as a novel of ideas it tends to be treated either as a treatise upon ideas with little regard for the difference between novelistic and essayistic rhetoric, or as a failed thesis novel. Bellow's rhetoric of form in *Herzog* tends to be ignored. *Herzog* is a particularly good example of the problems that arise in criticism on novels of ideas but it raises additional critical problems by being encyclopedic in content and form. Chapter four in part two of my study will review selected criticism on *Herzog* in relation to Bellow's practices as a novelist to give some insight into these critical problems and the extent to which approaches that resist the narrative features of the novel can serve to highlight its textual features when read against criticism that attempts to meet the novel on its own terms. Chapter five focuses on Bellow's encyclopedic depiction of character in relation to his encyclopedic treatment of ideas. Chapter six focuses on Bellow's use of the grotesque to develop character and ideas. Chapter seven examines Bellow's rhetoric of form through his accentuation in organization which directs his dialogue with the narrative tradition. *Herzog* is Bellow's reflection upon the novel as a reflection of reality, just as Herzog's ponderings in Ludeyville are reflections upon his own crisis as a reflection of the modern crisis in thought and values.

Chapter 1

NOVELS OR IDEAS?

The invidious schism that developed when the novel was defined as either an autonomous fictional object or an extension of the author and his cultural reality has had serious implications for assessments and placements of twentieth century novels. This schism, reinforced in New Critical formalism from the one side, in social realism from the other, has led to considerable confusion in criticism of the novel. The tendency to define the novel as a whole in terms of dialectical, mutually exclusive opposites still persists in critical assessments where the novel is defined by selection and exclusion. The dramatic shifts in the placement of modernism within or in relation to the literary tradition affect the placement of other literary trends. Perhaps one of the problems in dealing with modernism is that while it was emerging, so much was written on it, using progressively narrower criteria, that the narrow paradigmatic boundaries which critics had set for modernism soon became exhausted, giving the impression that the mode of writing was itself narrow and had been exhausted. Conversely, the main problem in dealing with novels of ideas is that too little attention has been paid to them because ideas in novels were regarded as suspect by defenders of the tradition and modernism alike. As a result critics demonstrate a prevailing tendency to regard novels of ideas as a clear departure from the novelistic genre or what they perceive as features characteristic to the novel.

In this chapter I will review a few studies that take novels of ideas into serious consideration and I will clarify some of the confusion of terms used to refer to novels concerned with ideas. Generic analysis of novels of ideas tends in one direction; they are considered as a departure from the conventions of tradition. Criticism of novels of ideas tends in another direction; they are examined as if they were flawed traditional novels, modernist novels, or thesis novels and thus they are examined with assumptions and expectations that are contrary to their basic generic nature, as some of the commentators below point out. Attack and defence characterizes the commentary on novels of ideas and ideas in novels which proves highly fruitful in one respect; it helps to identify the aspects of novels of ideas that are perceived as problematic: their manner of treating ideas, characterization, and structure. But the attacks and the defences alike are rooted in a theoretical conception of the novel as a genre or a fictional artifact which novels of ideas do not easily fit into. The preconceived paradigm largely controls the analysis of novels of ideas and thus the problematics of the theoretical basis of the approach feed into their analysis.

Outside Tradition: Essays, Abstractions, Anomalies

This narrow conception of the novel resulting in categoric dismissal of novels of ideas is to be found in David Daiches' revised edition of *The Novel and the Modern World* where he points out in his "Preface" written in 1959 that since writing his first edition twenty-one years earlier, he had come to the conclusion that D. H. Lawrence must be added and Katherine Mansfield and Aldous Huxley deleted because they "are not ... 'novelists' in the strict sense" (viii). Daiches does not specify a reason why Huxley is not a novelist but mentions it as if it were obvious. According to the most common use of the term 'novelist,' the short story writer would be an obvious omission in a study of the novel. But Daiches' dismissal of Huxley, as not being a novelist, in favour of Lawrence needs explaining. The answer is to be found in Daiches' study of Huxley in his first edition, where he first analyzes Huxley's works as if they were the autobiographies of a "smiter," to borrow Todorov's term in "The Modern Gadfly," and then dismisses them from the novelistic genre:

> Critics have shown a great deal of confusion in discussing the technical aspect of Huxley's novels. The fact is that Huxley is no novelist; he has never mastered -- is not really interested in -- the elements of form and structure in fiction. We may note how frequently he makes his heroines

> write long diaries or autobiographical documents or makes them utter long philosophical monologues. His novels are either a series of character sketches or simple fables or tracts (209). His real genius is as an essayist. He has a gift for brilliant discussion, for sketching an atmosphere or a character, for making a point. His essays are always quite brilliant affairs technically. He is not really aware of the problems that face the writer of fiction of his day, but he does know how to handle -- in isolation -- an exposition, argument, and description. (210)

Daiches' praise of Huxley's essayistic genius is above all a condemnation of his abilities as a novelist. According to Daiches, Huxley's kind of writing proved to be relevant neither to "The Novel" nor to "the Modern World"; novels of ideas he classifies as rhetoric, not novels. Daiches' problems with fitting rhetoric or ideas into his conception of the novel may also be seen in his confession that he did not include Lawrence in his first edition because he could not come to terms with him, finding him "both fascinating and frustrating, both a towering genius and an obsessed prophet" (viii).

Sheldon Sacks also emphasizes the difference between rhetorical and novelistic structures in *Fiction and the Shape of Belief* when he sets satire and apologue firmly apart from the novel (or "action" as he also refers to the novel), regarding the three as mutually exclusive forms of narrative. He defines "the organic principles of the three types" according to the way in which the moral purpose of the author informs each type of work, using Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Johnson's *Rasselas*, and Fielding's *Tom Jones* as examples:

> A satire is a work organized so that it ridicules objects external to the fictional world created in it.
>
> An apologue is a work organized as a fictional example of the truth of a formulable statement or series of such statements.

> An action is a work organized so that it introduces characters, about whose fates we are made to care, in unstable relationships which are then further complicated until the complication is finally resolved by the removal of the present instability. I shall now substitute the term "novel" for "action." (26)

The empathy and action that Sacks identifies as generic characteristics of the novel seem essentially synonymous with "felt experience."

Sacks' basic thesis that these three types of narratives demand different kinds of reading is sound. Quite sensibly he points out that a thematic reading of *Tom Jones*, singling out certain ideas, is likely to produce a reading of the novel which amounts to treating it "as a species of apologue," something which it is not (3). He explains: "in works like *Emma*, *Pamela*, and *Tom Jones*, or, for that matter, in *The Sun Also Rises* or *The Sound and the Fury*, ethical statements and ridicule of character traits -- central to the informing principles of the apologue and satire, respectively -- are always subordinated to the informing principle of represented action" (16). Sacks is quite right in suggesting that argumentation or satirization of ideas does not inform these novels and he is also right in distinguishing between the two distinct methods of addressing ideas in narrative.

But Sacks' method of classification breaks down in three different ways. First, Sacks emphasizes that satire points beyond the work to external objects, whereas the apologue only refers to the enclosed world of the work itself. Sacks asserts for instance that "we have advanced halfway to irretrievable confusion" if "we claim that Johnson embodied one of his beliefs in Rasselas as a satire on Stoicism," stating that the Stoic is meaningful only as a moral lesson for Rasselas "of 'the emptiness of rhetorical sound'" (12, 14). But in addition to serving the function of teaching Rasselas a lesson, the Stoic also refers to reality -- to anyone in the world at large who offers pat philosophical guidelines on how to deal with life -- solutions which prove to be "empty" if they are not borne out by experience. Rasselas, furthermore, also points outwards, to the reader who is to take his lesson to heart.

Second, Sacks' identification of *Rasselas* as an apologue is contestable. Sacks assumes that the penultimate chapter in *Rasselas* provides its central statement and draws the conclusion:

> Any complete statement of the idea that is exemplified in *Rasselas* would have to include at least the following qualifications: earthly happiness does not exist, but its absence does not result in unbearable misery in this world for the reasonably virtuous who, in addition, may turn their eyes with hope toward heaven. (55)

In *The Approach to Fiction* Douglas Hewitt classifies *Rasselas* as a novel of ideas and observes: "Religion, here brought forward as an absolute value, has not previously been presented as a possibility; had it existed, for example, some comfort might have been possible for the bereaved philosopher" (167). And further modifications might be added to Sacks' modifications of the idea exemplified in *Rasselas*, because, as Sacks himself points out, the various characters seem to derive considerable happiness from chasing happiness, devising plans that promise pat solutions for happiness, even if these offer meagre returns when tested. It is also worth noting that the inherent irony that informs *Rasselas* is heavily underscored in its final chapter entitled "The Conclusion, in Which Nothing Is Concluded." Pekuah's plans to join a convent, the princess's plans to "think only on the choice of eternity" and "raise up for the next age" young women who would become "models of prudence, and patterns of piety," and the prince's plans to become the perfect ruler -- none of these plans reach fruition: "Of these wishes that they had formed, they well knew that none could be obtained" (1251-52). The final irony is that the characters "return to Abyssinia," although it remains unclear whether or not they go back to Happy Valley from which they made such efforts to escape (1252). If consistent presentation of the admirable is a distinctive trait of apologues, it seems that *Rasselas* demonstrates the desirability of cooking up great schemes for man's moral, social, or spiritual improvement meanwhile knowing that they cannot be obtained. Or is the admirable to be found in "Imlac and the astronomer" who "were contented to be driven along the streams of life, without directing their course to any particular port"? (1252). Both *Rasselas* and *Gulliver's Travels* may be described as making statements on man's *post-lapsarian* being. *Rasselas* demonstrates that it precludes man's possibility of finding perfect happiness and *Gulliver's Travels* that it precludes finding the perfect man or state because man's fallen nature affects all his institutions. Neither work offers or dramatizes a tenable alternative option in its resolution, other than recognition and acceptance of humanity as imperfect rather than ideal.

Third and last, Sacks accomplishes his exclusion of works designed along the lines of apologue and satire from the genre of the novel by failing to link them to more recent works. He repeatedly insists that narratives organized along the lines of satire and apologue cannot be novels. The satire *Gulliver's Travels*, if not a novel of ideas, is at least a precursor of this subgenre of the novel and the apologue, if not a thesis novel, is also at least its precursor. A more recent and more representative example of a work organized like an apologue, as Sacks defines it, is Lawrence's *The Plumed Serpent*. It clearly demonstrates by the example of the main character how important it is to choose a life of instinct and passion, qualities defined in the novel as life-affirming, and to reject restricting cultural expectations, defined as life-denying. Although devised structurally to present, illustrate, and defend an attitude to life and human nature that may be summarized in statements, as ideas, in the manner of a thesis novel or apologue, *The Plumed Serpent* is nonetheless a novel.

Sacks captures important structural aspects which set apart three different ways of weaving ideas into the fabric of a narrative in his definition and defence of the different kinds of reading required by satire, apologue, and novel, despite the flaws that may be found in his analysis. Sacks' discussion of the presentation of the "admirable" in the three generic types that he examines indicates that he sees a clear affirmation of specific values in the apologue, a more variously modified affirmation in the novel, and considerable difficulties of detecting values that are unconditionally affirmed in satire. These elements point the way towards a rough distinction between thesis novels, traditional novels, and novels of ideas.

Mary McCarthy and Douglas Hewitt do include more recent novels of ideas in their commentary, but both regard them as an unfortunate departure from the conventions 'great' novels use for dealing with ideas. Both McCarthy and Hewitt employ highly interesting manoeuvres to fit traditional novels to terms usually set for other types of novels, respectively that of the thesis novel and a variation upon the New Critical version of the novel as autonomous fictional entity that holds together diversity and tensions, best exemplified in the modern novel. They shift the New Critical stigma on ideas from the 'great' novels to narrowly defined novels of ideas. The few novels that fit their respective definitions of novels of ideas become scapegoats that must suffer the association between ideas and abstraction, inferior characterization, and fragmentation that puts traditional novels at a disadvantage when they are measured by New Critical standards.

McCarthy is often 'accused' of being a novelist of ideas herself and her *Ideas and the Novel* gives rise to the suspicion that in it she practices the kind of critical commentary that Eliot suggests in *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* poets produce by "form[ing] their critical statements with a view to justifying their poetic practice" (29). McCarthy finds that despite widespread use of the term novels 'of ideas,' its precise meaning remains unclear; "I must say that it is not clear to me either, though I sense something derogatory in the usage, as if there were novels and novels of ideas and never the twain shall meet" (19). McCarthy explains that the "term has never been in [her] vocabulary" but judging by "what other people mean by it," it refers to two kinds of novels: one she likens to "a seesaw," due to its inconclusive treatment of ideas, and the other, which does reach some kind of conclusion, she calls "a missionary tract" (19, 23, 24). Having pleaded ignorance of what is meant by a "novel of ideas," she proceeds to conflate under this term novels of ideas, thesis novels, and novels where ideas have an important function although their structure is controlled by development of elements other than ideas. Having conflated under one term the three different types of novels that Sacks identified, McCarthy then proceeds to distinguish between two kinds of novels of ideas. In her description of features characteristic of novels to which the term 'novels of ideas' refers, she emphasizes their tendency to extreme abstraction. On the other hand, in her description of novels that McCarthy classifies as the other type of novel of ideas, she underscores that they are grounded in "fact," objects, places, characters, or, essentially, in the concrete. This other type of novels of ideas turns out to be the traditional novel and the thesis novel combined under one rubric which also accommodates a number of novels of ideas. With a deft sleight of hand McCarthy redefines the term "novel of ideas" so that it becomes meaningless, "a tautology" as she herself says, because she applies it to the tradition which she finds James to have upset. In fact she inverts the New Critical classification of novels so that modernism stands for abstraction, tradition for the concrete. Whereas the New Critics defined the concrete as grounded solely in image and scene, McCarthy redefines the concrete in a novel along social realist lines, as reality, history, society, "fact." By dismantling the term novel of ideas and redefining it as referring on the one hand to the twentieth century novel and its twentieth-century inheritors as a form that concretizes ideas, and on the other to a departure from this tradition in novels that are extremely abstract, she narrows the definition of actual novels of ideas along lines that shift her own novels from that category to the category of traditional 'great' realist novels.

McCarthy's examples of abstract novels of ideas are the works of Peacock, which she hesitates to call novels because of their brevity and lack of "involvement of the reader in the characters' fates," as well as all of Huxley's novels, Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, Solzhenitsyn's *Cancer Ward* and *The Third Circle*, and Malraux's *Man's Fate*. She notes that these works consist largely of discussions of ideas (20). A feature crucial to this abstract type of novel, she argues, is that the characters are isolated from the world at large: in a sanatorium, on an island, in a secluded castle or mansion, hospital, prison. "Or the island may be moral, self-constituted by a literary clique (*Point Counter Point*), by a group of like-thinking, semi-political Bohemians (*Les chemins de la liberté*), by a cell of revolutionaries (*Man's Fate*). What is involved is always a contest of faiths" (20-21). And -- most importantly -- "in these narratives no idea can win out over another. Nobody is convinced or persuaded" (22). This kind of "novel of ideas ... does not allow for any resolution. Nothing decisive can happen in it; it is a seesaw. ... A real event ... is reserved for a postscript; it does not belong to the text proper" (23).

The final characteristic that McCarthy identifies as peculiar to this type of novel of ideas is a sense of abstract timelessness which she sees as the culmination of the features already mentioned. She finds that these novels convey "an endless, an eternal regularity" through their inherent isolation from a world of action, combined with an emphasis on discussion of ideas, to the extent of diminishing "a real event," such as a minor character's death, to an incident, soon forgotten in the heat of the central activity: "the main characters go on arguing as before" (24). She continues:

> The sense of eternity may be represented under other aspects. In André Gide's *The Counterfeiters*, ... Edouard, the chief character, is shown writing a novel in which a facsimile of him is writing a novel, in which, we suppose, still a third figure ... The black-hatted Quaker on the Quaker Oats box holding a Quaker Oats box portraying a Quaker holding a Quaker Oats box, getting smaller and smaller in infinite regress. In *Point Counter Point* Huxley borrowed the repeating decimal device. (24)

In short, McCarthy finds that this form of novel of ideas tends to privilege inconclusive discussions rather than persuasion and action, isolation above social involvement, repetition instead of development, all of which reinforce the abstract timelessness of ideas: "[i]deas, though some may age, are indifferent to time" (24).

Having briefly demonstrated the extreme abstract tendency of the type of novels usually classified as novels of ideas, McCarthy deftly dismisses them and asserts that what she calls "the missionary novel sometimes referred to as a tract" is what most people mean by "a novel of ideas" (24). This particular kind of novel is McCarthy's main focus in her *Ideas and the Novel.* In this category McCarthy includes novels by Tolstoy, George Eliot, Victor Hugo, Dostoevsky, Dickens, John Updike -- but her first example is D.H. Lawrence:

> Far more than the discussion novels with their eternal seesaw, [Lawrence's novels] are truly novels of ideas. Without ideas none of them, after *Sons and Lovers*, could even palely exist (28). Lawrence's hatred of the intellect ... is strange, certainly, in a man who himself lived almost wholly for ideas. ... His insistence on blood and instinct as superior to brain was a mental construct incapable of proof except on the mental level (27). What I have in mind are books like *Women in Love, Aaron's Rod, Kangaroo, Lady Chatterley's Lover,* where reasoning occupies a large part of the narrative, exerting a leverage that seems to compel the reader's agreement. The incidents, few or many, press home like gripping illustrations the point being proved. (25)

McCarthy points out the difference between a "missionary novel" and a "missionary tract." She names *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as an example of a missionary novel: "It is animated by a strong conviction but, if I remember right, does not 'go into' the argument for and against slavery (25).[1] The missionary tract resembles the discussion novel "in that it may have the air of a panel discussion, with points of view put forward by several characters speaking in turn and each being allowed equal time. But it soon appears that one speaker is right and the others, though momentarily persuasive, are wrong" (24).

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[1] McCarthy adds that "there are missionary elements hiding in many tales that pass for thrillers or love stories. In fact it is hard to think of a novel that does not seek to 'proselytize'" (25).

McCarthy argues that when the author desires to express explicit ideas in a novel and win the reader over to an agreement with his point of view, as in the missionary tract novel, he must select a spokesman to voice his views. The spokesman may be one character who represents the author's attitude, the narrative voice may carry that role, or the role may be divided between two or more characters who represent the author's views. She notes that a character need not consistently lend voice to the author's view but may also at times variously and markedly depart from it, without ceasing to be his spokesman in other instances. She also argues that these novels tend to display an alertness to the insidious effect of ideas -- prominent in society at their time or in written works that have affected the main characters' way of thinking. McCarthy leaves her preference for novels that have a socio-political bent in no doubt.

The main problem with McCarthy's definition of missionary tracts is that she argues that all but few novels that take ideas into consideration are in fact thesis novels. But in the final analysis she comes to the conclusion that the nineteenth century English novel failed to fulfill the function that she has allotted to it -- that of presenting as a central symbol the embodiment of one central idea representative for the social politics of its age, like Napoleon in continental novels at the time, or, presumably, like Hitler in her own *The Group*. Another problem in her definition is the "spokesman." McCarthy maintains that the author's means of persuasion are delimited to use of characters to function as the author's mouth-pieces. Her definition is considerably narrower than Booth's term the "implied author" which assumes a broader interaction between narrative elements to indicate what might be construed as the author's values and attitudes. This problem arises directly from her application of the generic features of thesis novels to a variety of novels that are not constructed in their manner. Thesis novels depend heavily upon character for persuasion. As McCarthy points out, the conflict of ideas is gradually tilted in favour of one set of ideas which the main character(s) affirm through choice and action as in Lawrence's *The Plumed Serpent.*[2]

Ideas and the Novel is an impressive defence of the view that modern writers should not be debarred from responding to the world they live in by resisting the ideas in society and in literature that they find insidious and by persuading their readers that there are more positive alternatives. But McCarthy's study is above all an authorial apologue and as such it gives valuable insight into her novels as, for instance, *The Group* which alternatively satirizes and affirms ideas through character and concludes with an action that drives home the author's distrust of rules, restrictions, tyranny. The dividing line between a novel of ideas and a thesis novel is very fine indeed because there is a thesis embedded in novels of ideas. But *The Group* is a missionary tract, a thesis novel, rather than a novel of ideas because it shows a universal solution to the cultural problems it addresses, like *The Plumed Serpent*. *Ideas and the Novel* is not impressive as critical theory for novels of ideas, nor indeed for ideas in novels. To read all novels that take ideas into account as if they were tracts that argue and demonstrate a thesis -- all but a few that most obstinately resist such reading -- neither does justice to thesis novels nor to other novels. The dividing line that McCarthy draws between the abstract and the concrete in setting and characterization, inconclusiveness and incontestable resolution, is controlled by a social realist resistance to modernism, as defined by New Criticism, and does not advance understanding of ideas in novels. It only inverts the New Critical application of these concepts, retaining its oppositional dialectics and offers scapegoats to be sacrificed so that "concrete" ideas may be recovered in novels, and certain novels of ideas and thesis novels may enter the mainstream of the traditional 'great' novel.

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[2] Susan Suleiman has interesting articles on the *roman à thèse:* "Ideological Dissent from Works of Fiction: Toward a Rhetoric of the *Roman a These*" and "Pour une poétique du roman à thèse: l'exemple de Nizan,"*Critique* 30 (1974): 995-1021. The drawback of her analysis is that she conflates under the term *roman à thèse* all novels that deal with ideas and detects in them variations upon the structural device of apprenticeship: exemplary apprenticeship, negative apprenticeship, a combination of these two, and action upon the completion of apprenticeship. The structural device of apprenticeship alone does not serve well enough as generic identification. The device of exemplary apprenticeship may be found in the *Bildungsroman*, for instance, as well as in thesis novels. In her distinction between explicit propaganda and other explicitly persuasive novels Suleiman notes that in propaganda novels the apprenticeship has been completed and is affirmed in a struggle against antagonistic forces -- the struggle carrying the main action of characters consistently presented as either good heroes or evil enemies, allowing no room for ideological doubt. The formal difference between propaganda and other novels may be more due to the peculiarities in characterization that Suleiman notes in "Ideological Dissent," or in some other means of manipulating representative characters, than in the structure of completed apprenticeship.

Hewitt in *The Approach to Fiction*, like McCarthy in *Ideas and the Novel*, struggles with the New Critical problem of ideas in the novel by continuing to work along lines set by New Criticism. But Hewitt's study is of much greater interest than McCarthy's. He devises a more effective scapegoat. Hewitt's analysis of novels that he acknowledges as novels of ideas is more thorough. He not only inverts the premise of the New Critical paradigm of modernism so that it applies more properly to novels that demonstrate interest in ideas, but he uses an opening in the paradigm itself to render it useless as the means to exclude ideas from the modern novel while still accepting its basic ideas. In his first chapter, "A Declaration of Intent," Hewitt criticizes the view that there is only "one, right, central fictional tradition, from which *Wuthering Heights*, say, and *Moby Dick*, diverge":

> In taking realism as the norm, Ian Watt is within the main English tradition. There are others, though most have a shorter history. A very influential one has been established by critics who combine a desire to treat novels as though they were lyric poems with an urge to establish patterns of symbols, myths and archetypes. The limitations of this method, too, are not only seen in its wilder excesses -- the burying of novels under evidences of unrestrained ingenuity -- but by the number of works which it shows itself patently unable to deal. (2)

The unnamed, very influential critical method is obviously about to be taught a lesson in how to deal with more than one kind of novel, on its own New Critical terms.

Hewitt stresses the formalist notion that ideas are problematic in fiction -- a potential threat to the artistic unity of the work. His critical frame of reference is therefore radically different from McCarthy's: her emphasis is on ideas as they relate to "fact," reality, history; his on ideas as disruptive of fictional autonomy. As a result, in finding a proper place for ideas in novels, Hewitt is working against a theoretical handicap that he is well aware of and expressly states:

> the feelings roused by ideas are particularly likely to be disruptive; the speculative or argumentative frame of mind is hard to accommodate because it tends too easily to move outwards from the novel. Ideas are very portable. The novelist may provoke speculation or argument, but he cannot easily control its development. And once he has provoked us to argue, to bring evidence to bear on issues within it as part of a direct argumentative process, where will we stop? (176)

Although presented in a concentrated form in "novels of ideas proper," as Hewitt calls them, "ideas -- formulatable propositions -- are not confined to novels of ideas" (169). "But when we encounter them in other works," he asserts, "we take up an essentially different attitude towards them; on those occasions when we do not, I think it can be shown either that we are misreading the book or that the work is flawed" (169). Hewitt argues that two radically different kinds of novels, evoking altogether different attitudes to ideas, can accommodate their disruptiveness without suffering from it: novels of ideas and "the greatest novels."

The special immunity, although not tolerance, that Hewitt grants novels of ideas is based on his view that generically they are not rooted in the novel but in philosophical writings which encourage a different way of responding to ideas than the novel and he also maintains that they are no longer to be found in the serious Highbrow novel. "Novels of ideas do not form a continuum with other kinds of novels," says Hewitt, "but with 'imaginary conversations,' occasional essays, polemic and learned essays" (169). He explains:

> Novels of ideas are not aberrant bastard forms in an age of fiction; they were there before fiction became the most popular prose form. The impulse

> to dramatize the clash of ideas and the desire to read such dramatization is deepseated. The dialogues of Plato bear witness to it. (148)

Hewitt asserts that modern novels of ideas appear only in the form of science fiction. He observes:

> The commonest obvious kind of failure in the contemporary form of the novel of ideas -- science fiction (or, as its practitioners often prefer to call it, speculative fiction) -- comes from the writers' desire to equip their characters with plausible and significant sexual relationships. (149-50)

The magnitude of the speculative fiction writer's error in equipping characters in novels of ideas with plausible and significant sexual relationships may not be obvious beyond the triteness suggested, but it goes against the very grain of Hewitt's conceptional construct of novels of ideas:

> Other works of fiction are self-contained; novels of ideas are not. Despite formal gestures towards resolution, we are not bothered by the sudden introduction of new attitudes (167). It is only in novels of ideas proper that we do not need to distinguish between two different ways of responding, because these novels are so unresolved and their characters are so generalized that when we return from the speculations and arguments set going by the novelist's formulation of ideas, but not controlled by him, we shall not disrupt the books. (175)

Hewitt constructs his simple and narrow definition of novels of ideas from a detailed analysis of Peacock's *Crotchet Castle*, supported by further references to Voltaire's *Candide* (1759), Johnson's *Rasselas* (1759), *Hermsprong* by Robert Bage (1796), and Nathanael West's *A Cool Million* (1934). Hewitt has these works carry the stigma of abstraction as well as the lack of fictional autonomy, cohesiveness, characterization, and authorial control, out of the eighteenth century novel and into science, or speculative, fiction. "What distinguishes novels of ideas from other kinds of fiction is certainly not the quality nor the originality nor even the frequency of their ideas," says Hewitt, but "far more the particular way in which we are invited to respond to the ideas and the extent to which this response is developed almost in isolation from other responses" (163). He continues:

> ... the novelist of ideas, in choosing this form, is paying tribute to the fact that ideas do not exist in a vacuum but are held by men as part of their total attitude towards their experience; the works in thus making us feel that the ideas propounded are held by people, differ in their effect from theoretical essays, though they closely resemble essays, such as those of Montaigne and Lamb, where the writer is revealing his personality rather than arguing a case. But the characters are allowed to achieve their individuality only to a very limited extent. They are never allowed to arouse feelings which might take attention away from the ideas which are the novelist's first concern. (164)

In brief, Hewitt objects to an imbalance in emphasis, where ideas or the appeal to intellect takes precedence over both the development of character and the appeal to emotion.

Hewitt argues that if the characters or, more likely, the types in these novels were to "engage our feelings" more than the ideas developed in the narrative, they would fail because we would become aware of the unnatural "emphasis on formulatable notions" (149). The only instances where Hewitt thinks that this intellectual distance may be necessary, since "a more overtly emotional response would overwhelm us," is in instances like *Candide* and Nathanael West's *A Cool Million*, where "situations of accumulated mass suffering" are described in graphic detail (169). But to Hewitt, "the speculative frame of mind which is demanded by novels of ideas remains a fundamental problem" because "the very nature of ideas -- that, unlike any other element in novels, they are discrete and detachable -- means that any disturbance of the balance will tend to make our response not a literary one at all" (169).

Hewitt points out that not only does non-literary speculation affect the characterization, but it also affects the form and the unity of a work as a whole. Hewitt describes the reader's response to reading the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century novels of Johnson, Voltaire, and Peacock as follows:

> Our response ... is less to investigate an idea than to imagine what it would be like to hold it. In novels of ideas we may be said to entertain ideas; the festive metaphor is appropriate because the ideas are frequently not those with which we normally spend every day. Our vicarious enjoyment, indeed, is often the enjoyment of entertaining somewhat outrageous ideas, or holding successively a number of incompatible ones. In this promiscuity, such novels correspond to that argumentative and dialectical process by which we are often said to 'make up our minds.' (149)

He notes that "the basic principle of *Crotchet Castle* is non-resolution" (153).

> Conversations, speculations are not brought to a conclusion but endlessly interrupted or led astray. Yet the novel must be brought to a resolution and in order to counteract the inherent inconclusiveness of the novel, Peacock solves this problem of bringing a novel of ideas to a conclusion by his pastoral love story; only a relationship which we recognize as highly artificial can coexist with the equally artificial debate form of the rest of the book and only an obviously conventional ending of this kind can bring matters to a close. (165)

The evidence of not only inconclusiveness but extreme lack of cohesiveness that Hewitt finds pervasive in the works he classifies as novels of ideas is manifold: the author's character is more clearly delineated than those of the actual characters and he feels free to introduce new ideas without previous notice but not to allow the reader "a deeper imaginative participation in the experience of the characters who embody or speculate about ideas"; "inconsistency, which might be severely damaging in some novels, is here no more than a minor blemish"; Peacock, in particular, uses not only epigraphs, but also footnotes, and "constant appeals to the classics" in a book permeated with "an air of erudition"; "[n]on-logical resolutions are not uncommon in" these overly rhetorical novels; and Peacock's "Folliott [who] stands for 'moderation' or 'good sense' ... is associated with food and drink, the things farthest from pure ideas ..." and tends to truncate arguments with these preferences (167, 151, 158, 157). Hewitt finds that confusion reigns supreme in these novels; fragmentary narrative methods complement a pluralistic world view so that they are either nihilistic or they affirm the *status quo*, implicitly discrediting the intellect and ideas (159). And all of this is only to be expected, according to Hewitt, "because all ideas are presented as crotches, notions, doxies": "The dialectical method, combined with the fact that their authors are unlikely to be original thinkers who can produce a convincing new synthesis of conflicts, normally lead to a close which satisfies us by changing the terms of the argument" (155, 158).

Having exorcized into the distant past or the realm of speculative fiction the novelist who "shows himself seriously interested in ideas which demand discussion in their own right," drawing the reader's attention away from the work to speculation that lies outside its fictional boundaries, Hewitt turns his attention to "ideas in novels" (185-186). The novels that he discusses are mostly the same as McCarthy selects in her commentary on "missionary tracts." In his reconstruction of fictional autonomy Hewitt disregards the New Critical ban on taking into account the effect that the text has upon the reader but employs the New Critical structural concept of unresolved tensions between opposites. He argues "that much of the power of the greatest novels comes from an awareness of the possibility of disruption" (186).

> The greatest novels -- those which we feel to be the best metaphors for life -- are usually the ones where we feel the greatest tensions, where the risks are greatest. We feel when we are reading Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Dickens, Stendhal, Proust, Joyce, that our imaginative participation in the experience

> of the characters is in danger of swamping our sense of the whole necessary pattern; that our sense of local exuberance and inventiveness is in danger of destroying our sense of forward movement; that our sense of the urge to formulate beliefs of general validity is in danger of changing our response into one of argument and non-literary speculation; that our awareness of the possibility of the accidental happening is in danger of breaking a structure which relies upon the conviction that what happens is inevitable. …
> Novelists who have the intellectual energy and emotional commitment to their subjects from which major works spring are the kind of men who know the truth of Blake's proverb of Hell -- 'You never know what is enough unless you know what is more than enough.' Paradoxically, such breakdowns of tension -- such pillings away of novels from their centres of gravity -- often contribute to the general success of the novels, without ceasing themselves to be flaws. (187)

Other novelists that Hewitt includes in his discussion of ideas in novels are Mann, Lawrence, Conrad, George Eliot, and Forster.

Hewitt insists that ideas are flaws in novels, that they violate hermetic fictional boundaries and unity, yet he also argues that the violation itself establishes "conflict between the novel as achieved object and the novel as process, because many of them are tensions between the sense of the whole and the experience of the part" (192). Like Sacks, Hewitt rejects outright the kind of solution that McCarthy suggests, to read novels that address ideas as if they were thesis novels, apologues, or "missionary tracts," regardless of whether or not they are so constructed. Using the passage on aesthetics in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* as an example of the untenability of such readings, Hewitt observes that it has been

> widely taken as an assertion that art and morality are unconnected, that the artist has no concern with morality, and much ink has been spilt either

> asserting that Joyce (that creator of humane masterpieces) is a typical modern writer in advocating this view, or (more intelligently) puzzling over the apparent contradiction between this and Stephen's own desire to forge the uncreated conscience of his race and our sense of Joyce as a writer whose work has a clear moral bearing. (173-74).

Hewitt observes that if the discussion on aesthetics is read out of context "as an exposition on certain attitudes towards aesthetic questions ... we have virtually ceased to read this book; an extract or summary would do as well" (174). He notes that on the other hand,

> we can read the passage as part of the novel and then the links will be between these propositions and other parts of the book. But if we blur the distinction between these two ways of reading the passage we are likely to misread both the aesthetic theory and the novel. (174)

Hewitt's concept of disruption as a valuable element in narration and his definition of the two disparate elements in reading novels are insightful and extremely useful. In his observations on the tensions between the extractable parts and the whole in novels, between the novel as achieved object and process, Hewitt evokes Ransom's definition in "Criticism, Inc." of "the prose core to which [the critic] can violently reduce the total object, and the differentia, residue, or tissue which keeps the object poetical or entire" (238). But there is an important difference in critical attitude and emphasis apart from the obvious one that "poetical" must be replaced by "fictional." Ransom insists that the value of poetry lies in that which gives unity, but Hewitt asserts that the value of "the greatest" novels lies in the risks they take in shattering unity:

> Some of the conflicting forces within novels are inherent in any artistic endeavour -- between diversity and unity, for example -- and some come from the extreme impurity of novelists' (and most readers') impulses. By this I mean that many of the greatest novelists have not had in mind only to create a unified work of art; they have wanted, as Tolstoy did in the last

> part of *Anna Karenina*, to persuade us of political and social truths, or as George Eliot did in *Middlemarch* to document a way of life (184). Our necessary sense of Levin's (and Tolstoy's) passionate concern for beliefs is strengthened by those passages where Tolstoy's didactic aims come to the fore; our sense of Joyce's striving towards the unification within one book of the most diverse material is reinforced by effects (of repeated imagery of organs of the body, precious stones and so forth) which are in themselves inert and pedantic ... . (188)

Hewitt demonstrates that by rearranging the New Critical formulation of the novel, it can be made to fit both novels that it originally accommodated and the novels it excluded.

Yet there are problems that remain in Hewitt's manipulation of the terms that New Criticism sets for the novel as well as in his manipulation of the term 'novel of ideas.' By adopting the view that ideas are "flaws" because they point beyond the fictional world, Hewitt agrees to the underlying notion that the value of literature lies in its offer of escape from reality. Even his modification assumes that reality is hostile to fiction and that reference to reality is a "risk." Dull characters, boring or awkward style, and numerous other artistic "flaws" may make the reader's mind wander, whereas lively play of ideas or tensions arising from ideas may keep the reader spell-bound to the narrative, oblivious to reality. And Hewitt's history of the novel of ideas simply sounds better than it works, bearing the stamp of a conjuror's act. His careful avoidance of Huxley and Gide in his discussions of both novels of ideas and ideas in novels is glaringly obvious and understandable: *Point Counter Point* alone disproves that all modern novels of ideas are science fiction. His classification of Mann's *Magic Mountain* stands contested by McCarthy's reading of it. His definition of narrative features in the works that he acknowledges as novels of ideas is accurate: the characters are mostly types or caricatures that invite minimal emotional identification, the works are permeated with an air of erudition, disputations, truncated arguments, rapid shifts from the the intellectual to the ridiculous, or the ideal to the horrific or less than ideal, the viewpoints are multiple and endlessly modified by one another, the works resist firm closure and they do not grant consistent high seriousness to the ideas discussed or demonstrated. Characterization is extremely important in Hewitt's poetics because he prefers rounded characters of depth and complains for instance of "a sense of restriction" in James' development of Olive Chancellor as a character in *The Bostonians;* "a sense that she is being used by James, a sense of the abrogation of freedom";

> the great Russians, in particular, make us feel that there is more in their characters than is needed by the plot or the theme. James's practice is the opposite of this and his dislike of fluid puddings is thus inevitable. But it is surely true that his practice results in a diminution of the tension which yields energy. (186)

Hewitt does not consider that when he regards the character of Olive Chancellor outside of the context of the novel as a whole, he may produce the same kind of over-simplifications as when reading expositions on ideas out of context. Also, he neither extends his concept of interruption to apply to his construct of novels of ideas, nor does he consider the possibility that tensions may be established in novels between type, caricature, and rounded characters. Hewitt's assessment of novels of ideas may have to do with taste in reading, but it is also clearly shaped by his desire to include novels that had been excluded on the very terms that have been used to show them at a disadvantage. By retaining the basic criteria of New Criticism and its method of defining novels generically by exclusion instead of by demarcating differences, Hewitt only narrows the terms for exclusion.

James Mulvihill, in *"The Rebel Angels:* Robertson Davies and the Novel of Ideas" defends Davies from critical attacks on his novels as being "told" when they should "show." Mulvihill points out that the critics in question make demands of Davies' novels that they cannot generically fulfill due to their tendency towards the narrative methods and interests of novels of ideas. Mulvihill appreciates the potential that novels of ideas have for comedy and engagement in moral as well as ideological issues, even if he does insist on an extreme marginal status for novels of ideas:

> the fact is that the novel of ideas *per se* is an anomaly in English fiction. This is not to deny the existence of a minor tradition of sorts, including Aldous Huxley and Thomas Love Peacock, as well as much lesser figures like W. H Mallock and Norman Douglas. However, it is not a well-defined tradition, for the simple reason that the genre itself is not well-defined, and the term is often applied to works that are not really novels of ideas. (182)

Mulvihill refutes McCarthy's claim that missionary tracts are to be classified as novels of ideas: "A fine line separates the novel of ideas from the tract (as the didactic novels of the later Huxley testify), and the synthesis of ideas in *The Rebel Angels* is necessarily tentative, an implicit answer underlying the factious surface dialectic" (193).

However, Mulvihill agrees with McCarthy that the most important characteristic that defines the novel of ideas is the element of isolation in its setting as a means to set off, as Philip Quarles puts it in *Point Counter Point,* "people who have ideas to express." Mulvihill's view is almost verbatim identical to McCarthy's: "Peacock puts his in country houses, though a sanatorium or a cancer ward will do just as well, or even a prison. Or the isolation can be moral, as with the over-cultivated and world-weary cliques in Huxley's early novels" (184). Mulvihill finds *The Rebel Angels* to be Davies' most fully realized novel of ideas because the university setting fulfills the requirement of isolating the characters, providing a symposium setting for their discussions: "University life is a perfect arena for the clash of creeds and opinions that characterizes the novel of ideas" (190). "While elements of the novel of ideas may be found throughout Davies' fiction," says Mulvihill, Davies fully incorporates these elements only in *The Rebel Angels*" (187). With *World of Wonders*, the final novel of the Deptford trilogy, and "the work that most closely approaches in form a novel of ideas," he says, "the way is clear for the genuine comedy of ideas enacted in *The Rebel Angels*" (187). But the symposium setting in *World* *of Wonders* is only "the framing device," whereas "Magnus Eisengrim's account of his life occupies much of" the novel, so Mulvihill asserts that it does not fully qualify as a novel of ideas, any more than *What's Bred in the Bone,* where "[t]here are ... still strong traces of the novel of ideas," but the symposium has been "replaced by a more conventional narrative line set against a much broader historical and geographical backdrop" (187). Mulvihill seems to have been taken in by McCarthy's narrowing of the premise for novels of ideas which would exclude *Rasselas, Candide,* Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook, Herzog,* and a number of contemporary novels of ideas, like Fay Weldon's *The Life and Loves of a She-Devil* and David Lodge's *Changing Places, A Small World,* and *Nice Work.*[3] Ever since *Fifth Business,* Davies has been particularly inventive when it comes to devising a narrative situation that allows for cultural analysis and commentary. The main difference between *The Rebel Angels* and the other novels is that Davies' commentators are fully involved in the main action instead of being either peripheral to it, or belonging to a different plane of time and place like the Jungian analyst in *The Manticore* and, more fancifully, the different spirits in Davies' last three novels *What's Bred in the Bone, The Lyre of Orpheus,* and *Murther and Walking Spirits.* By making a symposium as well as a setting that isolates the characters the prerequisites for fully realized novels of ideas, Mulvihill relieves Davies of some of their generic stigma by acknowledging only one of his works as a "genuine" novel of ideas whereas the others have only "elements" or "strong traces" of the genre.

Erudition and the informing effect of ideas upon character are traits that Mulvihill, like McCarthy and Hewitt, finds peculiar to novels of ideas. Mulvihill notes that a defining element in novels of ideas is:

> talk, copious amounts of talk on every conceivable subject, for the hallmark of the novel of ideas is an inexhaustible, exuberant eclecticism. The novels

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[3] The concept of isolation as McCarthy defines it can be made to fit most if not all novels. Austen's novels could be made to fit this category or Woolf's -- in fact any novel depicting an individual, group, family, or social class could be classified as isolated in some manner, culturally, ethically, geographically, mentally.

> of Thomas Love Peacock and Aldous Huxley are in this sense novels of talk, their characters seeming to exist solely for the sake of what they have to say. ... An in the end it is the ideas that these characters utter that determine who they are, what they do, even what happens to them. Their tensions and conflicts arise when these ideas clash, as they often do. A novel of ideas is a novel in which ideas not only take precedence over character and plot but largely determine them. (184)

He notes: "the real interest lies in the complex of ideas, complementary and conflicting, that informs the event, whether murder or marriage" (188). But Mulvihill modifies somewhat the limiting effect of ideas upon character when he comments that " temperament and opinion are closely related in the novel of ideas" (185).

Mulvihill observes that "the rich muddle" of mixed generic features and erudition in novels of ideas reveal that they are "a specialized sub-genre" of Menippean satire:

> "The Menippean satirist," in Northrop Frye's definitive account, "dealing with intellectual themes and attitudes, shows his exuberance in intellectual ways, by piling up an enormous mass of erudition about his theme or in overwhelming his pedantic targets with an avalanche of their own jargon." Clearly aware of his novel's Menippean ancestry, Davies pays tribute, directly and indirectly, to such predecessors as Rabelais, Erasmus, Robert Burton, Peacock, and Huxley (all cited by Frye). Moreover, two of the novel's characters, Simon Darcourt and John Parlabane, are engaged in writing works which, their artistic merits notwithstanding, are Menippean in nature. ... As Frye points out, the appearance of disorder in Menippean satire is deceptive and "reflects only the carelessness of the reader or his tendency to judge by a novel-centered conception of fiction. (189)

Mulvihill notes: "Disorder plays an important role in the *The Rebel Angels,"* and "the disciplines pursued within" the university "reflect at once this disorder and the attempt to resolve it" (190). Mulvihill also comments on the tendency in novels of ideas towards "a multiplicity of viewpoints" from which ideas are discussed -- "each separate and self-contained, each coloured by a particular attitude of mind" (191, 187). Mulvihill explains: "'Totality' is the sought for ideal in a novel of ideas. 'The problem for me,' according to Huxley's Philip Quarles, 'is to transform a detached intellectual scepticism into a way of harmonious all-round living'" (191).[4] Mulvihill concludes that the hallmark of "the true novelist of ideas" is a "broad comic perception" (194).

The characteristics that Mulvihill observes in novels of ideas are largely the same as those identified by McCarthy and Hewitt. His definition is narrow and marginalizing, yet vastly broader than theirs, demonstrating an appreciation of the comic strain and the multiplicity of contending views peculiar to novels of ideas; qualities resented most markedly by Hewitt and to a lesser degree by McCarthy. The relationship between the novel of ideas and the tradition of Menippean satire that Mulvihill notes, they overlook entirely. And Mulvihill's argument that an ideal of totality is an underlying element in this form of fiction suggests that they may also have overlooked the moral vision from which it springs. And in failing to do so, they find only moral confusion, ambivalence -- even pluralism or nihilism.

Outside Tradition: Modernist Essays and Polar Opposites

In the commentary on the generics of novels of ideas that I have discussed so far the stress is first and foremost on the marginal status of novels of ideas in their departure from the novelistic tradition, regardless of whether that departure is seen as some kind of novelistic devaluation as Daiches, McCarthy, and Hewitt suggest, or whether it is seen as having a value all its own as Sacks and Mulvihill assert. Other studies find a place for novels of ideas in modernism. But if a decided marginalization or categoric exclusion of the novels of ideas discussed above from the tradition of the novel seems questionable, classifying them as modernist works is also problematic. Again the novel of ideas only fits into the allotted category by narrowing its definition. In order to classify novels of ideas as modernism, earlier novels of ideas must be disregarded.

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[4] *Point Counter Point*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975: 299.

In "The Englishness of the English Novel," Q. D. Leavis sees the novel of ideas as "'unEnglish,' because of its obtrusive skeleton, barely fleshed over, and its distortion of life in the interests of an arbitrary philosophy" -- an adoption of the tendency towards aestheticism and intellectualization from French writers (170). She argues that the English novel, like "the Irish, the American and the Russian" had its "origins in a deliberate effort to achieve a national identity, while the French novel owed its birth, and developed, as an aristocratic society's preoccupations with the art of love and of refined social intercourse, in the specially conditioned world of the French court" (151). Writing in 1981, Leavis finds the English novel "much more satisfactory, in its truth to life and its scope, than the novel of ideas which is so popular on the Continent and is now admired and imitated over here" (158). The novel of ideas is "'unEnglish,'" she says, because of its "rigidity, not openness; whereas the tradition exemplified by the major English practitioners is more in the nature of a spiritual exercise for both novelist and reader" (159).

Unfortunately Leavis' article gives little assistance in identifying exactly how rigidity and distortion is manifested in novels of ideas and her classification seems to be more firmly grounded in personal taste rather than in generic analysis: objection to the ideas or the attitude of writers like Laurence Sterne, Iris Murdoch, Graham Greene, Aldous Huxley, Thomas Mann, and Albert Camus in his first novels. Works that she praises are for instance Solzhenitsyn's *Cancer Ward* and *The Third Circle*, and works that "support the form" of the "English novel" include Swift's "proto-novels," and novels by "amateurs like Peacock" (151). These works, presumably, do not evince the "coarsely satiric goal or a cynical view of human nature" that she associates with novels of ideas, but belong to the "tradition of radical and responsible enquiry into the human condition" (157, 163). Leavis gets rid of the bugbear novel of ideas by classifying it as French and modern, and thereby fails to account for similar methods of dealing with ideas in earlier works in English novels. Regretfully Leavis does not specify wherein lies "the distortion of life" to be found in novels of ideas. Above all, Leavis sees the novel of ideas as a purely modern form which reflects a general decay in morals and social cohesiveness (170).

In "The Emergence of the Discursive Novel in the Twentieth Century" Ann Mary Halász offers a more specific generic analysis than does Leavis. Halász examines the discursive aspects of novels of ideas and finds that "discursive novels" constitute a subgenre of the modern novel. Halász takes the distinction between "showing" and "telling" at face value, as corresponding respectively to "mimesis" and "diegesis":

> The formulation of ideas and their integration into the narrative did not present any technical difficulty for the eighteenth and nineteenth-century novelists, since it seemed to be the natural attitude of the narrator -- relating the story in the first person or omnisciently in the third person -- to talk to the reader in any fashion and on any topic he liked. The situation became more intricate in the last third of the past century when, on the one hand, the process of intellectualization of the novel began, and, on the other hand, novelists began to be preoccupied with artistic and aesthetic considerations concerning their work. The new conception of the novel as a work of art required, among other things, the effacing of the authorial narrator behind the characters, or the introduction of the method of "showing" instead of "telling." (113)

Halász observes that "the novelist of the early twentieth century who aspired to modernity was faced with a threefold task":

> (1) to deal with the phenomena of the human universe and to come up with an intellectual interpretation thereof; (2) to give precedence to the inner world over the events of the outside world; (3) to remain invisible within the fictional world of the characters.

> These requirements gave rise to the so-called discursive novel, which meets all these demands inasmuch as (1) it aspires to impart a philosophy of life inspired by the problems of contemporary reality; (2) the objective, outside world and its events appear mainly internalized through the main characters' consciousness (i.e., in their thoughts) -- the difference between the stream of consciousness novel and the discursive novel being that the latter is concerned only with the *intellectual* mental activity of the characters; (3) its main component is discourse in the form of dialogues with no narrator present. It is the characters who voice their ideas in the form of dramatized essays, as it were. In this respect the discursive novel can be regarded as a sub-species, or a special branch of the essayistic novel. (113-14)

Halász leaves unexplained whether "essayistic novel" refers to thesis novels or novels of ideas but her definition of the "discursive novel" certainly applies to Peacock's novels, as well as the ones she studies as "paradigmatic specimens of the novel type in question, such as Roger Martin du Gard's *Jean Barois* (1913), Thomas Mann's *Der Zauberberg* (1924), and Aldous Huxley's early novels" (114-15). She outlines four types of functions that dialogue has in narratives: characterization; "action-reporting speech" or "a report in the report"; dialogues "as speech act" or "pure mimesis" which "result in carrying ahead or modifying the plot ... so that they may be termed action-substituting or, more precisely, action dialogues"; and "the formulation of timeless statements, the exposition of abstract ideas, which, in their turn, may not be related to the corpus of events constituting the plot" (114). The last function Halász finds particularly prevalent in discursive novels. Halász sees the novel as an "epic genre" and dialogue as such she classifies as "an alien body in the narrative" (114). She rationalizes her classification of the "discursive novel" as a form that 'shows' rather than 'tells' by insisting that it is "a generally accepted compromise" that "the speech of the characters has been subordinated to the broader category of the dramatic scene and included among the elements of the narrative" (114).

Due to their reliance on discourse, in particular direct speech, the narrative technique of novels of ideas is mimetic in the same manner as modernist novels like Woolf's *The Waves* and Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying*. Friedman's emphasis on "image" rather than "idea" in his coinage of the terms "showing" as opposed to "telling" and his placement of Huxley on the "telling" end of the scale demonstrates that although novels of ideas are identical to modernist novels in technique, they are not customarily seen as a part of the modernist paradigm. They are classified as novels that "tell" because, as Halász notes, their emphasis on intellectual mental activity sets their depiction of consciousness apart from stream of consciousness. The applicability of her definition of discursive novels to Peacock's novels calls into question how exclusive this form of novels of ideas is to the early twentieth century. In her definition of novels of ideas as an epic form of drama, Halász manages to invert the 'telling'/ 'showing' opposition, but the result is a most peculiar generic classification.

Frederick J. Hoffman's "Aldous Huxley and the Novel of Ideas" shows clearly that when novels of ideas are measured against the New Critical modernist paradigm, they are found wanting in characterization, conclusiveness, and unity. Hoffman says that the novel of ideas is "an art form almost peculiar to twentieth-century literary history" (189). The defining characteristic that Hoffman finds in Huxley's novels is pluralism, typical of the twentieth century, and the main value that he sees in them is that they are literary curiosities, records of trends in thought. Hoffman agrees with Halász that novels of ideas are essayistic. Obviously the essayistic element cannot be accommodated when modernist requirements are applied to novels of ideas, any more than it could be accommodated in Daiches' concept of the novel and Hewitt's of fictionality and ideas in novels.

Hoffman agrees with Hewitt in finding the author the most clearly defined character in novels of ideas. A flaw that Hoffman finds prevalent in the novel of ideas, setting it apart from "the novel which incidentally *illustrates* ideas," is that it "uses them in default of characterization and other qualities of the traditional narrative" (189). He quotes Philip Quarles' definition of a novel of ideas in *Point Counter Point* as a "'statement of principle'": "[t]he character of each personage must be implied, as far as possible, in the ideas of which he is the mouthpiece. In so far as theories are rationalizations of sentiments, instincts, dispositions of soul, this is feasible" (189). Hoffman's reactions are:

> At first glance, the notion that ideas might take precedence over characters in a novel seems no less than monstrous; and of this reaction Quarles is himself aware: 'People who can reel off neatly formulated notions aren't quite real; they're slightly monstrous. Living with monsters becomes rather tiresome in the long run.' But Huxley has often demonstrated in his novels the fact that ideas may possess qualities which are comparable with those which animate persons -- and this particularly in a period of time when ideas are not fixed, calculated, or limited by canons of strict acceptance or rejection. Ideas, as they are used in Huxley, possess, in other words, *dramatic* qualities. Dominating as they very often do the full sweep of his novels, they appropriate the fortunes and careers which ordinarily belong to persons. (189-90)

Hoffman continues that Quarles is in a special sense "a 'modern intellectual' -- find[ing] a much greater charm in ideas than in persons" (190).

> An idea, or large generalization about human behavior, when it is joined to a character in such a novel, is modified to become an attitude or mood. In the interests of narrative and dramatic movement, this attitude or mood leads to action -- but it is always *typical* or *characteristic* action, the adventure not so much of a person as of an idea in its contemporary world. The formal essay proves; the novel of ideas demonstrates. Each is strongly dominated by the intellectual character of its author. (189-90)

Like McCarthy and Hewitt, Hoffman notes the absence of a firm resolution in novels of ideas. He observes: "The drama implicit in an idea becomes explicit when it is shown as a point of view which a *person* holds and upon which he acts. The comedy implicit in an idea is revealed in a concrete demonstration of its inherent untenability" (194). Hoffman emphasizes that "one cannot repeat too often that there is no 'moral' to be drawn from the career and fate of ideas in such a novel. There is never any fixed contest between right and wrong, or between true and false, from which we are supposed to get what comfort or instruction we can" (194). Hoffman's conclusion is that above all "[t]he novel of ideas is a narrative form peculiar to an "unstable" age -- one in which standards are not fixed beyond removal or alteration (193). And although he says that this novel demonstrates ideas, its characters "are not allegorical figures, for there is no single thing which the drama of their interaction is designed to illustrate (193).

The reason for this peculiarity, Hoffman explains, is to be found in Huxley's view, expressed in the collection of essays *Do What You Will,* that there is no absolute 'truth' but a diversity of truths, psychologically valid only to the individuals who hold them. Hoffman continues: "The weaknesses of Philip Quarles' kind of intellectual are admitted by Huxley in these essays. One must accept life in all its manifestations, [Huxley] says in one place, condemning Swift for having failed in this regard …" (193). Hoffman also points out that in speaking of Wordsworth's "Handy Manual for Nature Lovers," Huxley further expresses his distrust of adherence to formulated theories, which he sees as "fear of the labyrinthine flux and complexity of phenomena that has driven men to philosophy, to science, to theology -- fear of the complex reality driving them to invent a simpler, more manageable, and therefore consoling fiction" (193). Hoffman responds: "The principal defect in this philosophy of knowing is its marginless and limitless generosity to flux itself -- so that one actually escapes the responsibility of *any* interpretation of life by accepting and entertaining momentarily each of them (193).

In addition to seeing novels of ideas as inconclusive, Hoffman notes the prevalence of discussion and the importance of a setting conducive for such activity, finding that the multiplication of viewpoints and forms counteract any possibilities of unity:

> The structural requirements of such a novel are perhaps simpler than they at first appear. One requirement is to get these people, or as many of them as possible, together in one place where circumstances are favorable to a varied expression of intellectual diversity. The drawing room, the party, the dinner -- these are all favorite points of structural focus. To supplement them, there are the notebooks (as in *Point Counter Point*), correspondence (which serves as a substitute for conversation and varies the narrative procedure), the casual or accidental meeting of two or three persons, who continue their discussions in one form or another, and the prolonged exposition, in essay form, of any given or chance suggestion which the narrative may allow. (194)

Hoffman argues that "[t]o record that confusion requires a tolerance of it and, above all, a willingness to grant for the moment at least that ideas may have a vitality and attraction quite apart from their more sober values, those values they possess when they remain confined within the limits of systematic philosophy or science" (200). This tolerance, says Hoffman , has great value "for us who wish to apply it to our investigation of the twentieth-century novel of ideas. For it allows for a generous accommodation of all the currents of thought which have been influential in our times" (193). The prime value that Hoffman sees in novels of ideas is thus that they offer portraits of the vitality and confusion of ideas in a given period -- "or at least its intellectual interests and habits" (200). "Opposed to this point of view is the tendency toward unity -- purely intellectual knowledge which secures a unity from diversity of experience and holds tenaciously to that unity" (193). Huxley´s novels of ideas will not provide such unity, according to Hoffman, but they are

> an expression of the tremendous vitality which ideas had in the 1920's; they are also a testimony of the intellectual confusion of that period. ... Most important of all, these novels are a brilliant portrait of the age, or at least of its intellectual interests and habits. Whatever defects of manner the novels of Huxley suffer, his vital interest in the intellectual concerns of his time has resulted in several dramatic portraits of contemporary life and thought. (200)

The agreement between Hoffman, McCarthy, and Hewitt on the defining characteristics of novels of ideas is surprising, considering that Hoffman insists on its twentieth century relevance which Hewitt denies; that Hoffman sees it as dated by its ideas, whereas McCarthy finds the ideas in the same novels timeless and abstract; and that Hoffman's pronouncements on the novel of ideas draw entirely upon Huxley's *Point Counter Point*. They agree in finding inconclusiveness and failure to instruct or to comfort its dominant trait; they agree as well on settings and situations that allow for exchange of ideas -- discussions. The pluralism and multiplication of viewpoints and narrative forms that Hoffman finds typical of this century, Hewitt sees as characteristic for the eighteenth century novel of ideas. The two of them also agree that the clearest delineation of character is the author's. Hoffman confirms the emotional detachment that McCarthy and Hewitt note in novels of ideas, and argues that ideas replace the dramatic function of character and action, by controlling both; thus highlighting the comic aspects of the characters' choices in life.

Other studies that affirm the modern relevance of novels of ideas, however without specifying that the genre is more typical of modernity than previous eras, are Jerome Meckier's "Aldous Huxley and the 'Congenital Novelists'; New Ideas About the Novel of Ideas" and D. J. Enright's "Thomas Mann and 'The Novel of Ideas.'" Meckier puts forth an impassioned defense of the novel of ideas, the term and its form, and of Huxley as a novelist of ideas. Enright, on the other hand, does his utmost to relieve Mann of the stigma of being associated with the term and the genre of novels of ideas.

Much of what Meckier says in "Aldous Huxley and the 'Congenital Novelists; New Ideas About the Novel of Ideas,'" Hoffman covers in his analysis, but Meckier takes some interesting points a bit further. And in doing so, his commentary on Huxley resembles Enright's on Mann in a number of ways: on the broad scope of the ideological trends integrated into the fabric of their respective novels, on characterization in relation to ideas, and on their alertness to the plurality of human attitudes towards ideas. Contrary to the emphasis of writers exclusively interested in specific ideas, "Huxley's concern extends to the value of ideas in general and the role they play in modern life, which are essentially a novelist's preoccupations," observes Meckier (206). He sees Huxley as writing in reaction to congenital novelists -- traditional storytellers:

> Novelists *with* ideas supply the novelist *of* ideas with many of his finest targets. For *Point Counter Point,* Huxley assesses the case for a modern humanism. He compares the Lawrentian thesis and the ideals of Bloomsbury; then he measures both against less sanguine views of the human condition .... Huxley recruits his undesirable novelists from the previous century and the Edwardian era. He treats congenital novelists unjustly, disparaging them too severely for supposedly ignoring the paramountcy of ideas, just as Mrs Woolf unfairly downgrades Bennett, Galsworthy, and Wells for their allegedly excessive obsession with externals. ... They capture something of the outward life of the century, Huxley concedes; but, along with most modern poets they include "precious little of its mind." They do not portray the intellectual condition of the age, nor do they critically examine very many of its controlling ideas and guiding principles. (210)

Meckier uses Lessing's observation on "the handicap" involved in writing modern novels of ideas to argue the superiority of novels of ideas:

> … she means an additional requirement the superior novelist imposes upon himself. This view of the novel of ideas as something more, not less, than ordinary fiction, is central to the aesthetic of Aldous Huxley, especially in *Point Counter Point*, his finest contribution to the genre. (203)

Meckier aims to overturn the ruling trend. But these are his opening words: "The novel of ideas -- 'that strange mutt of literature'[5] -- has generally attracted slander instead of critical inspection" (203). Meckier is here in agreement with McCarthy that the 'novel of ideas' is a phrase that modern critics have used in a derogatory manner, as slander rather than as a descriptive and meaningful literary term.

Meckier affirms Hoffman's observation that Huxley traces the dominant ideas of his time. Meckier sees "Greco-pagan vitalism" behind the character of Rampion, "the pagan life-worshipper"; behind Quarles the ideal of wholeness and attempts to musicalize his fiction; behind Bidlake Shelleyan idealism; behind Lord Edward "monistic biology"; behind Illidge "Communism"; behind Webley "fascist tendencies"; behind Spandrell "Baudelairean diabolism"; behind John Bidlake "unadulterated sensualism"; and behind Lucy Tantamount "amoral hedonism" (205, 206). And Huxley exposes the "personal inadequacies" of their characters as well as of the various attitudes towards ideas, says Meckier, especially "the inapplicability of Romantic attitudes in modern contexts," conveying a "deliberate parody of both the Wordsworthian sense of wonder and Bennett's romantic realism" (210).

Meckier argues that the relationship between characters and ideas in *Point Counter Point* is more complicated than critics of the genre, like Hewitt -- "one foe of the genre" -- will allow for when they see characters in novels of ideas only as embodied ideas:

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[5] George Catlin reviewing *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan*, in *Saturday Review of Literature*, 27 Jan. 1940: 5.

> The value of an idea in *Point Counter Point* depends on the time and place it is expressed and the success and failure of the speaker's previous and subsequent activities, a situation unusual for Peacock's novels and foreign to the prose narratives in *Rasselas* and *Candide*. Ideas in *Point Counter Point* are always tested by incidents. (206)

Meckier asserts that ideas are an integral part of Huxley's characterization: ideas and character are interrelated:

> Huxley's novels do not ignore feelings and relationships. In Quarles' opinion, feelings contribute to the ideas upon which human interaction depends. Ideas, Huxley contends, determine conduct. The discontinuity separating people stems from the discord among the one-sided ideas that govern their images of themselves. Ruptures to the events in which Huxley's characters participate -- concerts, dinner parties, marriage, parent-child relations -- are the inevitable consequences. As Quarles points out, theories are seldom pure. In large part they are "rationalizations of sentiments, instincts, disposition of soul." Huxley remains sensitive to the feelings and ego as irrational bases for the mental fabrications his self-centered characters rely on to justify their lives. (205)

Meckier quotes a *Paris Review* interview with Huxley: "People are not interested in ideas by choice," Huxley informs Robert Nichols. "They are predestined to ideas as they are predestined to a Roman nose'" (212).

Point counterpoint -- point counter point -- these are the ruling principles in Huxley's novel, Meckier observes: "The framework *Point Counter Point* posits in 1928 is satiric and negative: modern life is a musical piece badly played, a contrapuntal travesty of good composition, an exercise in cacophony" (215). He finds that in the book,

> the only guiding hypothesis offered is universal counterpoint: idea against idea, head against heart, body against mind, mind against matter, art against

> life, husband against wife, parent against child. Formless multiplicity becomes the most feasible accommodation for the nature of things. Multiformity of plot, character, mood and idea is Quarles' unifying principle. Synthesis Huxley accomplishes parodically by enclosing in one enormous structure all the friction, contradictions, and contrapuntal clamour that preclude -- and therefore replace -- positive governing laws. Seeing life whole in 1928 means cataloguing the ubiquity of discontinuity and self-division. The only absolute Huxley puts forth in the twenties is that there appears to be none. The only point worth making about modern life is its apparent pointlessness. (215)

Yet, as Meckier also observes, underlying the pointlessness and the plurality, the author's opposite ideal may be discerned: "Despite a plethora of characters who illustrate the manifold varieties of self-division, the enlightened cultivation of body and mind, once practiced by the sane, harmonious Greek, is Huxley's provisional definition, in 1928, of wholeness and health" (209).

Meckier asserts that the novel of ideas is not the only kind of novel that Huxley can write. He sees embedded in the narrative of *Point Counter Point* elements of the traditional novel:

> Novelists of ideas can write like traditional novelists if they choose -- at least Huxley can, even if, according to Elinor, Quarles cannot. During their idyllic courtship in chapter nine, Mark and Mary Rampion, like Mellors and Connie Chatterley, bring each other back to life. Theirs is the one instance in Huxley's novel of a relationship that is complementary, not contrapuntal. Huxley also succeeds with the melodramatic murder of Webley in chapter thirty-three and the revenge the British Freemen exact from a suicidal Spandrell. In these scenes, however, Huxley is always more than a congenital novelist, not less. He does not write each scene to

> determine what philosophical implications arise, nor does he focus on a set of implications and devise each scene with them in mind. ... Huxley ... begins to examine ideas each man holds, and envisions a working-out of the emphatic contrasts between their attitudes simultaneously in the same creative act. (208)

Meckier also notes that in his later novels Huxley turns from the novel of ideas to the thesis novel: "The later Huxley writes less successful novels of ideas in which he expounds at length positive proposals of his own. He uses discussion scenes that encourage his ideas and the speakers representing them to win out over less appealing choices" (217). "*Island*," in particular, "epitomizes and virtually exhausts the kind of novel of ideas the later Huxley writes" (219). "Describing his conception of *Paradise Regained*, Huxley confirms an affinity between the novel of ideas and fictional accounts of ideal societies ..., defin[ing] utopia as a society organized according to all the best ideas," says Meckier (219). His main worry is that Huxley may be "the last of the polymaths, the last modern with the ability and audacity to pattern his career on the great poet-philosophers. The novel of ideas is in the danger of becoming a museum piece like the epic poem it was scheduled to replace" (219).

Enright, on the other hand, is more worried that the stain of "novelist of ideas" will demean Thomas Mann's command of his medium and he rejects the term 'novel of ideas' as an unworthy description of his artistry and craftsmanship:

> 'A NOVELIST of ideas': the reading public appear to have taken this description of Thomas Mann a little too seriously.... Though it has never made itself articulate, the basic objection to Thomas Mann's work -- in England at any rate -- is that the ideas are too many, the attitudes too diverse, the expressed opinions too argumentatively and minutely presented: in short, that his major novels read like excessively accurate reports of lengthy and ill-governed debates. And it is certainly the case that if the

> reader approaches those works in a spirit of idea-seeking, consciously on the look-out for revelation, then his reactions will be precisely of this sort. (113)

In order to vindicate Mann from being labelled a novelist of ideas, he sets up a red herring -- a "straw" definition of "the type of composition commonly called 'the novel of ideas': to wit, a story with portentuous gaps here and there in which the reader is tacitly invited to insert some more or less appropriate idea as it already exists more or less in his head" (115). Even the narrow constructs that McCarthy and Hewitt offered as novels of ideas are more reasonable and credible than Enright's. It seems doubtful that a work may be found that fits his description, so he has nullified the term. Yet, according to Enright, this kind of novel seems to be represented by "Graham Greene and Aldous Huxley, or ... Kafka and Camus -- writers who are, in fact, *less* inadequately described as 'novelists of ideas'. But with these authors the idea is plainer or at least more single-minded" (113).

Despite Enright's definition which suggests that he is unaware of the traits commonly ascribed to novels of ideas, the direction that his defense of Mann takes reveals that he is well aware that the main charges brought against the genre are that it depicts plurality rather than commitment to a fixed set of values and under-developed character types that simply lend human names to ideas. And, remindful of the discursive peculiarities that Mulvihill and Halász call attention to, Enright defends Mann's tendency to employ "Table-Talk," "aphorisms," "reflections," "maxims, set attitudes and stated theories of behavior," adding: "our suspicion of explicit statement in art should not be allowed to deprive the artist of what may simply be one device, one effect, among many" (117). He notes:

> It is one thing if the explicit aphorism has been introduced because the writer has failed to make a point by other means; it is another thing altogether if, as in *Faust*, the aphorisms are finally perceived in the light that

> the drama throws on them -- or the darkness, for Mephistopheles is a zealous aphorist. (117)

Enright says that *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, for instance, "eventually provides [ ] an ironic showing-up of certain of the 'good sentiments' and an ironic vindication of certain of the 'hard sayings'" (117). Obviously no stranger to the most common definitions of a novel of ideas, even if resentful of the term itself, Enright refutes their applicability to Mann's novels -- shows them up as oversimplifications.

Mann's accomplishment, Enright argues, is that on the one hand he perceives how relative people's understanding of ideas is: "that … the ideas of the good life may signify for a number of people an unpleasant death, should be clear to our generation" (114). Ideas must be seen in context of an individual, "at a certain time and in a certain place," says Enright (114).

> Now the writer who is going to show us this and at the same time eschew, in the name of "exhaustiveness," any pronounced selectiveness or weighing of the scales, will need to possess a remarkable combination of gifts. Among them, a living apprehension of history that will enable him to approach his own age without yielding to the comforts of easy partisanship. (114)

This kind of insight is, however, not enough to make a good novel, Enright points out: "But the prime gifts must be those of the novelist -- the talents for seeing, smelling and hearing, as well as for clear thinking -- since this surely is the job that the novelist can do best and the job that he would best be doing" (114). Enright finds that Mann manages to present ideas that are inextricably interwoven into the texture of each novel: the characters' manner of being and behaving (often conveyed suggestively, inviting symbolic interpretation) cannot be divorced from their manner of thinking. He says: "Very often he takes one of the most general and most universal [idea or truth] -- for he is not at heart interested in the exotic or marginal -- and gives one fully developed example in one fully realized person with a particular limp or way of folding his pyjamas" (115).

Enright concludes on the significance of ideas in Mann's novels:

> In the end Mann has achieved -- if we insist on ideas -- a considerably serious one: a man's ideas are neither simply acquired from others, nor simply self-inspired, but they arise out of an interaction of inner and outer, self and other, intuition and instruction, in the very process of living. There is, truly speaking, no such thing as 'education for living,' but only education through living; and no valid distinction can be drawn between 'life' and 'thought' or 'life' and 'spirit,' if both are real. (120)

Enright proposes that a term other than the stigmatized 'novel of ideas' be found to fit Mann's novels "fantastic in their range and yet uttered in the accents of cool but compassionate common sense, and related one to another without mere duplication" (120):

> Under the circumstances, it might be more useful if in connection with Mann's fiction we dropped the words 'ideas', 'attitudes', 'points of view' and so forth. And indeed one of his best English speaking critics talks instead of "polar opposites":
>
> > Convinced that monism is a "boring" philosophy, he divides the universe into a glittering series of polar opposites
>
> -- which does suggest that cumulative tension which keeps the major works moving steadily along their long routes. (116)

Enright concludes: "*The Magic Mountain* is an exciting comedy, *Doctor Faustus* an almost intolerable tragedy, *The Confessions of Felix Crull* an uproarious and shrewd farce" (120).

Enright's study of Mann affirms the point made by Sacks, Mulvihill, and Meckier, discussed above, that it is important for critics to recognize the compositional aspects of novels that examine ideas without necessarily arguing consistently in favour of any of the particular doctrines that they examine. Contrary to McCarthy, Hewitt, and Hoffman who find that inconclusive novels of ideas fail to instruct and comfort, Enright asserts that in the hands of Mann they do both: "Unlike much of our most brilliant modern writing they send us back into life, not terrified into despair or dullness or quiescence by the sight of others' follies, but cheerfully prepared to commit our own" (120). Sacks notes that, surprisingly, the effect that reading *Rasselas* has on him is

> a profound sense of comfort which is not a likely result of Johnson's demonstration that there is no earthly happiness, though certainly he convinces me of this as well. It is as if he were, without my knowing how, convincing me of something quite positive with each addition to his fictional demonstration that hope is a phantom. (52)

Enright may indeed have hit upon an explanation of the effect that Sacks finds "a source of surprise ... yet ... not idiosyncratic" in his observation upon the value of acceptance of opposites and exposure of follies in Mann's novels (52). The fact that Mulvihill and Meckier note a similar ideal, that of wholeness, totality, underlying novels like Davies' *The Rebel Angels* and Huxley's *Point Counter Point* suggests a reason why Sacks classifies *Rasselas* as an affirmative, *Gulliver's Travels* as an inconclusive, form of dealing with ideas in narrative. *The Rebel Angels*, like *Rasselas* and Peacock's novels, suggests to the reader that man, despite his intelligence, has an astounding and endearing capacity for folly, allowing even the best of ideas to fly into the realm of crotchets. These works even suggest that the oddest notions may give greater insight and joy than strictly formulated theories. *Point Counter Point*, on the other hand, like *Gulliver's Travels*, place greater emphasis on the pitiful results when man becomes too confident in the explaining power or truth value of ideas and systems. Enright's unwillingness to consider the traits that Mann's novels share with other novelists that have been classified as novelists of ideas seems to arise from his acute awareness of the stigma attached to the term 'novel of ideas' and what it implies. In this his method is representative for the general tendency in the commentary above to define the genre by attack and defense.

Confusions, Polar Opposites, Inconclusions

If the discussion above offers little agreement on the literary historical and generic placement of novels of ideas, it certainly demonstrates that both the genre and the term most commonly used to describe it are seen as problematic. The paradigmatic construct of the novel conceived along the lines of oppositional dialectics precludes novels of ideas. Even a tacit acceptance of this construct invariably leads to their exclusion or extreme marginalization. Attempts to subvert this novelistic construct by manipulating its basic premise rather than breaking away from it altogether produce questionable definitions of novels of ideas, involving an extreme narrowing of the terms set for their classification and/or identification of works set up as scapegoats to carry their stigma. Yet the agreement in the commentary on the generic features peculiar to novels of ideas is considerable, even if assessments of their value divide into opposite camps.

There is notable confusion in the placement of the genre and its origins in literary history and a number of terms alternative to that of ‘novels of ideas’ are suggested. This tradition starts in Greece with Plato in the fourth century B. C., or with Menippus in the third century B. C., or sometimes at the French court, or around the turn of the century on the continent and in England. The stigma associated with ideas in the novel is clear; the terminology and its denotations are largely riddled with confusion. Daiches suggests that the confusion in discussions of Huxley’s novels may be eliminated by defining them as “essays” or “series of character sketches or simple fables or tracts” (210, 209). Enright believes that “polar opposites” serves better to describe Mann’s novels than the term ‘novels of ideas’ -- “[u]nder the circumstances.” McCarthy avows that this particular term has never entered her vocabulary and prefers to liken novels so described to seesaws or missionary tracts.

Thus the question arises whether the term should be rejected altogether and new ones be made to replace it. But because the replacements cited so far by no means exhaust the list of those suggested already, to add more would simply compound the euphemisms that already cloud the central issue -- that of the proper place of ideas and intellect in the art of the novel. The drawbacks of the alternative terms cited above are that they deemphasize that the novels they refer to are **novels** and call attention instead to their rhetorical aspects (essays, seesaws, missionary tracts) or their aesthetic aspects (series of polar opposites). Furthermore, the way that these representative alternatives to the term ‘novel of ideas’ focus on one aspect of the genre, leaving out the other, is symptomatic of the tendency to approach it from an either/or angle: either as a rhetorical form (Hewitt, Daiches) or as a novel; either as the traditional novel (McCarthy, Mallon), or as the novel that experiments with and calls attention to its technique and form (Enright, Leavis). As a genre it may be seen as an essay or as essayistic, as science fiction, as a satiric form, as an epic version of drama, and it seems to compare to “see-saws” as well as “polar opposites.” In itself the term ‘novel of ideas’ does invite the misconception that it refers to novels which are structured in the manner of thesis novels, moving their argumentation towards a resolution on the plane of ideas by an eventual choice between ideologies. But the advantages of keeping the term seem to me to outweigh the drawbacks. ‘Novel of ideas’ is a term coined specifically to demarcate their rhetorical and formal difference from thesis novels. Making their difference known seems the best way to solve the problem. ‘Novel of ideas’ aptly indicates the dual concerns of the genre it describes: interest in ideas and interest in novelistic form; interest in the form of ideas and the capacity of the novel to speak through its form.

Discussion or reflection upon ideas is uncommonly predominant in these novels. The ideas themselves are timeless, making the novels abstract according to McCarthy, or they are grounded in time and history, turning the novels into historical documents of ideological trends according to Hoffman and Meckier. Hewitt describes their ideas as irreverent, unoriginal, and incompatible. Novels of ideas invite the reader to entertain crotchets, notions, and doxies which discredit the intellect and ideas, as he says. Mulvihill agrees that the ideas are mainly crotchets and mental attitudes but sees them as a comedy of ideas presented with exuberant eclecticism. The polemics of novels of ideas, often evincing notable erudition, may be predominantly manifested in discussions, arguments, Table Talks, symposiums, or they may take such forms as letters, notebooks, inner reflections.

Most of the critics agree that ideas largely control the various aspects of novels of ideas, the characterization in particular. Enright asserts that the ideas are variously modified and arise naturally out of fully developed and idiosyncratic characters whose folly makes them endearing and heartening to observe. Mulvihill and Meckier also note the association between ideas and temperament, although Mulvihill asserts that the characters are usually controlled by their ideas -- that they exist for their ideas. Yet the characters are predominantly identified as oddly named stylized types, caricatures, or dramatized ideas who fail to elicit any sympathy from the reader -- the author's character being the one most distinctly delineated. McCarthy and Mulvihill agree that the characters in novels of ideas must be somehow isolated, in a country mansion, asylum, hospital, prison, or by their cultural, social, or professional separateness. Hoffman, on the other hand, suggests that above all the characters must be placed in a situation or setting conducive to exchange of opinion.

The form and structure of novels of ideas are also seen as affected by their multiplicity of ideas. The angles from which ideas are presented are multiplied in a variety of ways, through the number of characters who express their views, through allusiveness, use of disparate genres and forms of verbal expression, as well as the "repeating decimal device" of multiplying the narrative perspectives by enclosing narrative within another narrative, within another, and another, without a set limit of repetition. According to Hewitt, the dominant structural element in novels of ideas is disorder, looseness, inconsistency; they display a pervasive lack of unity due to digressions, or arguments that are either truncated or overthrown by changing their terms, and their marked inconclusiveness. McCarthy and Hoffman lend their modified affirmations to Hewitt's structural analysis. Mulvihill refers to Frye who identifies these and other features already mentioned as typical for Menippean satire. Hewitt sees the multiplicity and structural disjointedness of novels of ideas as tending towards either nihilism or the *status quo* -- Hoffman sees them as symptomatic of the twentieth century as an era of upheaval, relativity, and loss of settled values. But Mulvihill, Meckier, and Enright perceive in their formal multiplicity and their structural disunity or inconclusiveness a preference for a broad view of life, manners, and ideas; underlying the factional surface structure they see an implicit synthesis of opposites -- totality rather than onesidedness.

This summary may be a partial synthesis in that it brings together the disparate observations and has them supplement one another as they divide into oppositional attitudes. No further synthesis will be attempted in this chapter although it serves excellently for bringing out predominant generic features in novels of ideas and the contending attitudes towards them -- sometimes supported with arguments and examples. But the analysis of the individual features of novels of ideas in the commentary reviewed is controlled by oppositional dialectics of attack and defence of ideas in novels or novels of ideas, or a particular kind of novels of ideas above another, or a specific novelist of ideas above others. This either/ or view feeds into the analysis of the individual elements in novels of ideas and fails to give insight into their both-and nature. Some of the features identified as flaws in novels of ideas may indeed be rooted in a flawed conception of the novel and these need to be sorted out.

An approach that does not beforehand load the dice against its object of analysis is needed for novels of ideas. Approaches that assume that the novel is **either** a fictional object of unified, dramatized or 'shown' action **or**, if not felt experience, truth to life, spiritual exercise, then most certainly concrete objects, places, characters, facts, simply will not do. The approaches introduced in the following chapter are better equipped to accommodate **both** novels of ideas **and** other types of novels. They provide better grounds for analysis of the features identified in this chapter as peculiar to novels of ideas without prejudging them and the genre itself as problematic.

Chapter 2

INTERRELATEDNESS AND NOVELS OF IDEAS

Narrative and generic studies that do **not** perceive the novel in mutually exclusive opposites have dismantled the oppositional dialectics established by the formalist separation of fiction from reality. Rather than attempt to define literariness or fictionality, these studies attempt to discover how narrative is to be defined and, in that context, how the novel functions as a narrative form or genre. They consider the novel as grounded in the medium from which it springs and develops: language and the art of 'telling.' These approaches, based on broad comparative examinations of narratives from different epoches and cultural backgrounds in literary history, involve among other things a reversal of the formalist oppositional hierarchy and an insistence on the interrelatedness of narrative elements: 'showing'/ 'telling,' story/ discourse, form/ content, unity/ multiplicity, autonomy/ dialogization, etc.

The advantages gained by approaching the novel in this way are considerable. The problems that arise in schismatic and progressive accounts of the development of the novel from the late eighteenth century through the twentieth are cancelled out when the novel is viewed as different manifestations of narrative or of the novelistic genre. The Victorian novel is not put to a disadvantage by modernism, nor modernism by postmodernism, but a context is provided to assess the extent to which experimentation with the different aspects of language and/or the generic features of the novel is manifested in individual works or in different novelistic trends. Mikhail M. Bakhtin's definition of the novel as a separate fourth genre, additional to Aristotle's three basic genres of epic, lyric and drama, is particularly well suited for identifying novelistic trends and placing them in relation to one another, as well as for analyzing individual works.

In this chapter I will consider some problematic issues clarified in studies of the novel as narrative and the novel as a genre. The separation of 'showing' from 'telling,' content from form, and unity from multiplicity have in particular impeded appreciation of the narrative peculiarities and potentials of novels of ideas. I will consider these oppositions in particular and posit them against studies that resolve their oppositional dialectics. In their genre studies Northrop Frye and Mikhail M. Bakhtin assert that the novel is most fruitfully approached by taking into account its grounding in written language and its capacity to draw upon disparate generic forms. Bakhtin offers the most comprehensive analysis of the novel as a specific genre left unaccounted for in Aristotle's poetics and the most comprehensive assertion that the novel is a narrative genre where oppositional patterns are variously refracted, modified, satirized, and hierarchized. Contrary to the insistence of the critics reviewed above on the marginal position of novels of ideas, Bakhtin argues that the novelistic genre reaches it fullest realization in novels constructed in their manner.

Narrative: the Telling Form

Raman Selden suggests in *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* that Gérard Genette's theoretical approach to narrative "with its positing and cancellation of oppositions, open[ed] the door to the 'deconstructive' philosophy of Jacques Derrida" (61). Selden observes that "Genette's essay on 'Frontiers of Narrative' (1966) provided an overview of the problems of narration which has not been bettered" (60). Genette considers the problem of narrative theory by exploring three binary oppositions": "'diegesis' and 'mimesis,'" "'narration and description,'" "'narrative and discourse'" (60). In his cancellation of the opposition in these binary pairs, Genette establishes that *mimesis* or 'showing' is accomplished through *diegesis* or 'telling,' that narrative is also descriptive, and that "there can never be a pure narrative devoid of 'subjective' coloration," as Selden puts it, adding:

> However transparent and unmediated a narrative may appear to be, the signs of a judging mind are rarely absent. Narratives are nearly always impure in this sense, whether the element of 'discourse' enters via the voice of the narrator (Fielding, Cervantes), a character-narrator (Sterne), or through epistolary discourse (Richardson). Genette believes that narrative reached its highest degree of purity in Hemingway and Hammett, but that with the *nouveau roman* narrative began to be totally swallowed up in the writer's own discourse. (61)

Friedman, in his coinage of 'telling' as opposed to 'showing,' conflates under the term 'telling' both Plato's definition of *diegesis* as indirect speech, and the subjective colouring that all narration takes; under the term 'showing' he conflates Plato's definition of *mimesis* as directly quoted speech, and narration devoid of subjective colouring.

In *Narrative Fiction* Rimmon-Kenan observes that "the very notion of 'showing' is more problematic than it seems to be for the Anglo-American critics ..."

> As Genette argues no text of narrative fiction can show or imitate the action it conveys, since all such texts are made of language, and language signifies without imitating. Language can only imitate language, which is why the representation of speech comes closest to pure mimesis, but even here -- I believe (see p. 52) -- there is a narrator who 'quotes' the characters' speech, thus reducing the directness of 'showing'. All that a narrative can do is create an illusion, an effect, a semblance of mimesis, but it does so through diegesis (in the Platonic sense). The crucial distinction, therefore, is not between telling and showing, but between different degrees and kinds of telling. (108)

Rimmon-Kenan quotes a scale of speech presentation ranging progressively "from the 'purely' diegetic to the 'purely' mimetic" suggested by Brian McHale in "Free Indirect

Discourse: A Survey of Recent Accounts" and she also refers to Norman Page's *Speech in the English Novel* (109). The scale ranges from stages of diegetic summary, through stages of indirect discourse, to direct discourse ("'quotation' of a monologue or dialogue") which "creates the illusion of 'pure' mimesis, although it is always stylized in one way or another," and free direct discourse ("typical form of first-person interior monologue") (109-10).

F. K. Stanzel, in *A Theory of Narrative*, prefers the term 'mediacy' to describe 'telling' as the defining feature of narrative. His main interest is in charting the mediacy of person, perspective, and mode in relation to the narrative situations of first-person, authorial, and figural (center of consciousness) narratives, respectively (4-5). He has the following to say about the predominant generic trait of literary narrative:

> Mediacy is the generic characteristic which distinguishes narration from other forms of literary art. In earlier studies of narrative theory, the comparison of the mediate, indirect form, narration, with the direct form, drama, centred the discussion of mediacy upon the question of whether the reader's illusion was inhibited by the intrusion of a personalized narrator. In Germany, Friedrich Spielhagen and his followers had demanded 'objectivity,' that is, immediacy of presentation in the novel, as is the case in drama. As early as 1910 Käte Friedemann countered by establishing that the mediacy of narration is by no means inferior to the immediacy of drama, but instead constitutes a sort of analogue to our experience of reality in general: "'the narrator' is the one who evaluates, who is sensitively aware, who observes. He symbolizes the epistemological view familiar to us since Kant that we do not apprehend the world in itself, but rather as it has passed through the medium of an observing mind. In perception, the mind separates the factual world into subject and object." (4)

And Stanzel traces a scale nearly identical to McHale's, ranging progressively from "diegetic-narrative to the mimetic-dramatic" (66). Like McHale he places direct speech and interior monologue closest to 'pure' mimesis or immediacy, as he calls it; thus the former resembles the latter in "that the illusion of immediacy is superimposed over mediacy" (66, 47-48, 5). These two speech forms are central in 'scenic presentation' or 'showing' (47-48).

Theories that rely on strict dichotomies arising out of a separation of fiction from reality cannot do full justice to novels that explicitly signal critical awareness of ideas as well as motives and values in general -- an awareness that reveals the presence of a reflective as well as organizing creator. Because of Friedman's inclusion of discursiveness in his definition of 'telling,' the term serves to set apart all novels that openly demonstrate a critical awareness of human nature, society, trends of thought or manner of existence, from novels that do not place that kind of critical awareness in the foreground. But his terms fail utterly to distinguish between different types of novels that demonstrate an interest in ideas because as Genette, Rimmon-Kenan, and Stanzel point out, they are extremely imprecise. 'Showing,' as a term referring to *mimesis* in the Platonic sense, is central to novels of ideas with their emphasis on direct verbal expression in a variety of forms: extensive dialogue, letters, notebooks, interior monologue, etc. -- all of these are diegetic renderings of direct speech -- immediate and mimetic. Peacock's novels, as well as Huxley's, for instance, rely largely on 'showing,' *mimesis*. The prevalence of *mimesis*, represented direct speech in a variety of forms, in Huxley's novels explains why Halász and Hoffman treat them as if they were modernist works that 'show.' But the novels are also discursive, as Halász points out, and as a result Friedman classifies them as novels that 'tell.' As novels that 'tell,' novels of ideas would seem to fit into the category of the traditional novel but that happens to be the category most consistently denied them in the critical discussions above. The inherent conceptual confusion in Friedman's differentiation between 'showing' and 'telling' feeds into the invidious classification of all novels where the author is identified as being too visible and too concerned with ideas, abstractions, 'essence'

Genette's deconstruction of the oppositional hierarchy of 'showing' as opposed to 'telling' is an important step towards solving the problem of placing novels of ideas within the context of narrative. Their discursiveness does not place them outside the boundaries of narrative but firmly within a genre mediated or narrated through language. Viewed from the perspective provided by Rimmon-Kenan, Genette, and Stanzel, the novel is a genre where the whole strata of language can be activated to convey thought, action, emotion, story, information, the illusion of *mimesis*, reality, and so forth. And the recognizable forms of language expression, letter, speech, confession, dialogue, internal monologue, commentary, social dialect, etc., provide important contributions to the development of its content.

The dichotomy between content and form is another element that makes the analysis of novels of ideas problematic. Critics influenced by New Criticism insist that ideas are by nature separable from their medium and many structuralists argue that story is easily separable and transferable from one medium to another. Such assumptions encourage a reading of all novels that examine ideas as if they were thesis novels, as Sacks and Hewitt demonstrate above. When narrative studies that assume that content is independent of form are posited against studies that insist on their interdependence, the untenability of the separation becomes obvious.

Seymour Chatman's *Story and Discourse* is a particularly apt representative for both the New Critical and the structuralist oppositional dialectics. Chatman heavily emphasizes fictional autonomy and unity, setting up a seemingly impenetrable barrier between fiction and reality, implied and actual authors and readers, text and textual transmission. Yet at the same time he insists that story is not confinable within the text and that its medium has no bearing upon it. 'Discourse,' in Chatman's use of the term, signifies any form that can tell a story: "Story is the content of the narrative expression, while discourse is the form of that expression" (23). The "material manifestation" of discourse may be in words, drawings, film, ballet, pantomime, or every other conceivable way of portraying stories (23-24, 26). Storytelling is thus something that the novel has in common with a variety of forms of expression: news in the media, anecdotes told to a friend, and pictorial representation of the progress of a hunt on a caveman's wall all share this feature with the novel. "Story, in my technical sense of the word," Chatman observes, "exists only at an abstract level; any manifestation already entails the selection and arrangement performed by the discourse as actualized by a given medium. There is no privileged manifestation" (37).

Jonathan Culler agrees with Chatman and most other structuralists that story is easily separable from its discourse but Culler diverges from Chatman on two important points: he uses the term 'discourse' to refer to narrative only and he sees story and discourse as conditioned by each other. For the purpose of analyzing narrative, he says in *The Pursuit of Signs*, a distinction must be made between story and discourse (186). "Yet," he argues, if one element is pursued at the cost of the other, "either choice leads to a narratology that misses some of the curious complexity of narratives and fails to account for much of their impact" (186). Culler continues:

> If one thinks of discourse as the presentation of story, one will find it difficult to account for the sorts of effects ... which depend upon the determination of story by discourse, a possibility often posed by the narrative itself. If, on the other hand, one were to adopt the view that what we call 'events' are nothing other than products of discourse, a series of predicates attached to agents in the text, then one would be even less able to account for the force of narrative. (187)

Culler explains the necessity of including story as well as discourse in narrative analysis:

> For even the most radical fictions depend for their effect on the assumption that their puzzling sequences of sentences are presentations of events (though we may not be able to tell what those events are), and that these events in principle have features not reported by the discourse, such that the selection operated by the discourse has meaning. Without that assumption, which makes the discourse a selection and even a suppression of possible information, texts would lack their intriguing and dislocatory power. (187)

Culler finds that the two perspectives on narrative, the one that favours story and the one that favours discourse, cannot "fit together in a harmonious synthesis," yet he finds that "one must be willing to shift from one perspective to the other, from story to discourse and back again" (187).

Shlomith Rimmon points out that structuralists tend to favour story, action, in "A Comprehensive Theory of Narrative: Genette's *Figures III* and the Structuralist Study of Fiction." She says:

> Because a great deal of structuralist analysis is action-oriented, the *armature* [the basic structural skeleton of the work] is defined on the basis of indispensability for the action. Thus at the level of the *récit* [story] it consists of 'cardinal functions' or 'kernels' (Barthes, 1966; Chatman, 1969) and at the level of the *discours* it consists of 'dynamic motifs' (Tomasevskij, 1965; Dolezel, 1971).

Chatman, she says, "considers all the units of the Joyce text -- whether dynamic or static, whether 'kernels' or 'catalysts,'" thus preserving the "texture" of the narrative (37). But structuralists predominantly favour the abstract realm of narrative *langue*, *récit* (story), or abstractions from the *récit*, Rimmon says (37). And thus, she explains, "they often choose as 'illustrations' of the theory relatively simple narratives, like folktales, detective stories, spy stories -- perfectly legitimate for their purpose, but rather limited in its applicability to more complex works" (37). She argues that Genette, on the other hand, strives to maintain a balance between *langue* and *parole* -- the abstract and the particular, theory and criticism -- focusing on the discourse (*discours*), although sometimes using story (*recit/histoire*) "as a measure, a degree zero against which the artistic manipulation can profitably be examined ..." (39).

Wallace Martin, in *Recent Theories of Narrative*, agrees with Rimmon when he says that although the approach of the Russian Formalists and structuralists "may suffice when dealing with traditional tales, which in oral cultures are both narrated and enacted, it proves inadequate when applied to written narratives" (130). He finds that they view "narration as if it added descriptions, internal views of characters, and temporal rearrangements to a story that might otherwise be presented dramatically" (130). Martin classifies as Aristotelian the idea that story can be abstracted from the narrative and "that the same actions can be represented in various media"; 'story' and 'discourse' he finds "useful in identifying and describing certain techniques of narration" (108-09).

> But the conceptual clarity gained by distinguishing fabula from syuzhet, and story from discourse, is achieved at a certain price: it implies that what the narrator is *really* telling is a chronological story -- one that the reader tries to reconstruct in the right temporal order -- and that the elements of narration are deviations from a simple tale that existed beforehand. The result is a powerful method of dissecting narrative, but it pays scant heed to the narrator's structural reintegration of the materials in larger units of action and theme. (109)

Martin stresses the generic differences between narrative and dramatic forms, noting that the "great novels of the twentieth century have not been impressive when turned into movies";

> An emphasis on the unique features of narration leads to the conclusion that it is *not* "essentially the same" as drama. That is Barthes' view (1966, 121); Chatman, on the other hand, accepts Aristotle's emphasis on their similarity. (130)

Martin refers to Barbara Herrnstein Smith's "Narrative Versions, Narrative Theories" as an example of the view that "reconstruct[ing] a hypothetical chronological 'story' from which the written narrative deviates" is not necessary, "in principle or in fact" (109).

Martin himself argues that story is dependent on the narrative point of view (130-31). He also notes:

> abstractions such as syuzhet and story seem to imply that the same actions can be represented in various media. Again, this is in one sense obviously true, but when honed to a sharp edge by theorists, it leads to questionable dissections. It is useful if not essential to point out that characters can be presented differently -- visually or verbally -- and that what they say can be enacted/ quoted ("scene" or "mimesis") or rephrased by a narrator ("summary" or "diegesis" -- the latter words being those used by Plato and Aristotle). The gist is the same, despite changes in the manner. But the distinction becomes invidious when it is assumed that dramatic presentation, because it is closer to reality, is somehow better than narration. … If we assume that narrative is the norm and drama the deviation, we get a different view of their relationship and relative advantages. (109)

The "questionable dissections" Martin finds in narrative theories based on Aristotle's theory of drama are particularly prevalent in Chatman's *Story and Discourse*.

Chatman's approach is demonstrably in favour of 'showing' above 'telling' and of story above discourse. When discussing the discourse of narrative fiction in particular, Chatman distinguishes between nonnarrated stories and stories that have overt or covert narrators (146-262). Nonnarrated stories 'show' through direct verbal expression and many include brief descriptions and/or stage directions, or they 'show' through interior monologue or stream of consciousness (146-95). They are entirely mimetic, according to Chatman; they allow the story to unfold unmediated, unlike stories that are 'told' (32-34). Chatman's classification of 'narrated' stories closely resembles Friedman's: narrated stories range from "covert" to "overt" narration -- the latter sometimes involving commentary on the story -- interpretation, judgement, generalization -- or commentary on the discourse itself (196-262). Chatman sees fit to add in a footnote that Wayne Booth has persuaded him of "the *legitimacy*" of narrative commentary that involves "judging" (241). But, according to Chatman, narrative commentary, be it on the story or on the discourse, is admissible only as long as it contributes to an eventual unity:

> the narrative will not admit events or other kinds of phenomenon that do not 'belong to it and preserve its laws.' Of course certain events or existents [characters, setting] that are not *immediately* relevant may be brought in. But at some point their relevance must emerge, otherwise we object that the narrative is 'ill-formed.' (21-22)

The various digressions in *Tristram Shandy* alone suffice to prove that narrative commentary in novels is not only limited to interpretation, judgement, or generalizations about the story or narrative self-reference. The digression upon noses, for instance, fails to fit into any of these categories, much like many of the digressions in Peacock's novels. Chatman's Aristotelian vision is obviously shaped by New Critical emphasis on the eventual unity of disparate elements. His analytical schema is useless for the analysis of novels of ideas; it is likely to show them as flawed -- "ill-formed."

Culler's assertion that every narrative has a story to tell, or at least enough promise of one to keep the reader involved and guessing, is useful if applied as "a degree zero" measure, to borrow Rimmon's words. As such it can elucidate Tristram Shandy's delay or evasion of story and it can help to locate narrative gaps, among other things. But as Martin points out, when 'story' is defined with undue emphasis on a chronological story from which the narrative deviates, some highly questionable dissections are likely to result. In order to demonstrate the transferability of story from one medium to another, Chatman presents a comic strip, explaining that when "without dialogue, captions, or balloons [comic strips] are relatively pure (if banal) examples of narrative in picture form and as such conveniently illustrate [his] diagram of the narrative situation"; and then he proceeds to verbalize the story (37, diagram: 26). He points out: "These are abstract narrative statements .... This English-language version is not at all the story per se; it is but one more (and poorer) manifestational representation of it" (37). Nevertheless, he believes it to be "a reasonably complete depiction of 'what happens,'" even if other aspects of the story must also be considered:

> For example, the very existence of the king presupposes the event of his birth, his royalty presupposes the existence of a father (or some ancestor) who was a king, the event of his coronation, and so on. These are essential (if trivial) to an understanding of the actual story. (37-38)

Not only are the birth, the father, and the coronation of the king in the comic strip altogether "trivial" but absolutely *in*essential "to an understanding of the actual story." The barrier between reality and fiction that Chatman otherwise insists upon suddenly breaks down in this ludicrous manner. Chatman seems in fact to take for granted that the reader of the comic strip will assume that the king has a real-life history -- that he will envision the king's conception, his birth, or his coronation in the natural course of comprehending the action depicted in the comic strip. The absurd extremes to which Chatman takes the significance of story opens him to a devastating response from Thomas Leitch in *What Stories Are*.

Chatman's separation of content and form as well as Culler's assumption that "[a]nalysis of narrative depends ... on the distinction between story and discourse" and that analysis which synthesizes the two is inconceivable are most thoroughly undermined by Leitch in *What Stories Are* (186, 187). Leitch rejects the dichotomy between form and content. Initially he intended to divorce story from its discourse but found upon closer examination "that there was no way [he] could define *story* in terms of structure of actions or events without reference to a specific discourse -- that narrative was inescapably a kind of talking or writing or acting rather than an order of events" (x). He sets out to discover what fine line distinguishes stories from nonstories as well as what divides fictional stories from nonfictional stories, but he does this always in context of their narrative actualization. Leitch argues that a tellable story in one medium may lose its tellability if transferred to another and thus become a nonstory. One of his examples is:

> Chatman's verbal rendering of the comic strip [which] is so much 'poorer' than the version it glosses that it is not a story at all, not because it is only a single manifestation of a given series of events, but because the comic strip uses these events as the basis of a tellable story in a way that Chatman's version does not. (32)

Indeed, Chatman accomplishes what he sets out to do: he renders the action in words -- "what happens." But he fails to see that the humour in the comic strip -- its tellability -- is not embedded in the character's actions alone but in the interplay between his actions and the depiction of his character through a visual form. The discourse of the narrative in the comic strip is manifested pictorially in Chatman's terms. And this pictorial discourse implicitly comments on the character with an economy of expression that even a lengthy verbal rendering would fail to substitute, but which another visual medium might well capture. The capacity to render story as action and being, or "events" and "existents" as Chatman calls the two main "statements" of content in narrative structures, is something that narrative fiction has in common with other media but these are conveyed with equal or even greater efficiency in more highly mimetic media and do not constitute the distinguishing feature of the literary narrative form. Leitch rejects Chatman's approach as being essentially oriented towards the Aristotelian concept of dramatic action. Leitch's argument that a tellable story in one medium may become a nonstory when transferred to another form, a transformation due to the medias' inherently different discursive capacities and potentialities, is confirmed by Chatman's less than successful verbal rendering of the comic strip.

Film and television adaptations of written narratives demonstrate that some lend themselves better to a transference to visual media than others. Yet film has greater capacity to accommodate the generic peculiarities of the novel than drama. Film has an advantage over drama in its capacity to capture the fluid ease with which the novel can shift from one time scheme to another or from one perspective to another as in panoramic views, bird's-eye views, close-ups, flash-backs, foregrounding of character and scenic detail, and other such technical manipulation of time and space that the stage is ill equipped to accommodate. Nevertheless, 'dramatic presentation,' mimesis, or 'showing,' when applied to a novel, does not indicate how easily the narrative may be transferred to stage or film. Peacock's novels might be adapted to film or the stage with relative ease due to their reliance on dialogue and scenic description. Narratives that rely heavily on the voice of a narrator, internal reflective monologue, or stream of consciousness are less likely to be successfully adapted to visual forms. The film adaptions of Saul Bellow's *Seize the Day* and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* are not successful; they roughly transfer the a rough idea of the story from each narrative, but, deprived of the reflective discourse, the stories cease to be very interesting, tellable, or, even comprehensible. The shortcomings of these adaptions cannot be blamed solely on the incompetence of those involved in the transference of the two narratives; the importance of commentary and reflection is of such weight in relation to actions and situations in these narratives that they mark the boundary between filmic narratives and novelistic narratives. The story in *Seize the Day* and in *The Handmaid's Tale* each draws its narrative vitality from a discursive interaction which the novel accommodates but film does not -- even by straining the filmic medium.

The extent of voice-over and acting ability required to substitute for the narration in Bellow's novella and Atwood's novel goes beyond the potential that film has to accommodate description and commentary that cannot be conveyed through action, speech, and facial expression.[1] The power of the final scene in *Seize the Day*, for instance, rests on the fine balance between the narrator's evocative rendering of the main character's thoughts and impressions when watching a stranger's lifeless body and the situational comedy of the funeral guests' assumptions that Tommy Wilhelm must be a close relative when they recognize the sincerity of feeling in his loud sobs. Voice-over and acting cannot replace the complexity of this final epiphany of *carpe diem* stressed in the novella's title. Absurdity and comedy are certainly there in the film, but without the mediation of the narrator, the scene loses its power to render satisfactorily recognition of life in a confrontation with death, to convey recognition of the value of life itself through loss of material values and comforts, and to evoke other paradoxes, such as Wilhelm's sincere grief compared to the distant curiosity of relatives and friends at the funeral. In the film Robin Williams captures convincingly Wilhelm's initial sobs of hopelessness and defeat gradually changing to a protest, but the frame freezes before he gets to the howls that affirm life itself. The film concludes with this frozen visage distorted in a scream that recalls Edvard Munch's picture "The Scream." Apart from the expressive power of the acting, the scene becomes incomprehensible without the mediating context which links the scene with all of Wilhelm's defeats in life, and the fine balance in the novella is tilted, making absurd situational comedy dominant. The ending is made all the more misleading by heavyhanded changes in characterization, making Wilhelm's wife a vindictive bitch, his father not only an old man lacking in sympathy and tired of being responsible for a grown son but cruel, upsetting the balance so heavily that Wilhelm becomes everyone's victim. Once Wilhelm is no longer implicated in his own downfall and without the explanatory context that the narrator provides, the film seems to end with a peculiar temper tantrum because of frustration and failure in the middle of a stranger's funeral.[2]

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[1] Chatman expresses puzzlement at the infrequent use of the technique of internal monologue or stream of consciousness in film, although they can easily be achieved technically by voice-over (194-95). The answer may be that although documentary films use this technique successfully, voice-over is likely to put an undue strain on the visual medium if immediacy is its primary aim. Extensive use of voice-over in *Little Big Man* was found tiresome. Voice-over seems to be most successful when employed for comic effect. The television series *The Wonder Years* consistently relies on voice-over to establish a comic or ironic dialectic between the protagonist's youthful point of view and his adult understanding of his recollections. The film *Baby Talk* is another example of comic use of the device of voice-over. Further novelization of film is nonetheless entirely possible as audiences get accustomed to the device.

Offred in Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* has been deprived of every human freedom except to think and remember, and the stark contrast between the main character's inner monologues and the silence and inactivity imposed upon her is a crucial element in the story of Offred and the society she lives in. The changes in the film version are so fundamental that the question is raised whether it tells the same story. The characters are different, the society they live in is different. Almost every freedom Offred in the novel is deprived of, her namesake in the film has, except both of them are caught at the border, both lose their child and husband, and both have to service the household as Handmaid's to breed babies. Offred's original name is known in the film, but not in the novel. Offred's husband is shot to death at the border and she never gives him a second thought in the film; in the novel his fate is unknown and speculations about different but always awful possibilities add to Offred's suppressed pain. In the film Offred is shown as spunky and willing to take risks, always without the veil that confines the vision of the one in the novel, freely moving about on her own in a city that has no Prayer Wheels and no spying Eyes, freely interacting with members of the household. After killing the Commander according to instruction from the resistance movement, they get her across the border where she waits for Nick and the baby they are having, while Nick works on rescuing her daughter. Lengthy scenes of a character lying still in bed, carefully parcelling out her freedom to think, to question, to agonize, to remember, to dream, present generic problems not easily overcome in a dramatic medium and the story **had** to be changed so that it would be tellable. But it is no longer the story of Atwood's Offred. These film adaptions affirm that story and discourse are interdependent to a considerable extent, as Leitch demonstrates.

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[2] I had read the novella when I saw the film so I filled in the gaps. But according to a group of people who saw the film version before reading the novella, the ending was either incomprehensible or a temper tantrum.

If the oppositional privileging of 'showing' above 'telling' (with its implied division between fiction/ reality, mimesis/ diegesis, description/ narration, discourse/narrative) and of content above form is likely to yield questionable results in narrative studies, the privileging of resolution or unity of diverse opposites above redundancy and evasion of resolution, all of which Chatman's *Story and Discourse* favours, is also problematic. Leitch defines narrative as a "display mode," quoting Mary Louise Pratt, who points out that an "accomplished storyteller ... 'can pile detail upon detail, and can even be blatantly repetitive, because he is understood to be enabling his audience to imagine and comprehend the state of affairs more fully and to savour it for a longer period of time" (28). Leitch observes: "The way the storyteller displays this state of affairs in order to enable the audience to savour it more fully does not necessarily give them any new information, because narrative material is displayed according to a principle of enjoyment, not a principle of communication" (28). This tendency towards redundancy that Leitch and Pratt note in narrative, Chatman rejects outright when he asserts that "the narrative will not admit events or other kinds of phenomenon that do not 'belong to it and preserve its laws'" (21). Leitch points out that the emphasis on purposeful, conclusive closure in analyses of narrative stems from Aristotle's discussion of unity of action in relation to plot in tragedy, and Chatman's emphasis on story as events and existents is modelled on this dramatic definition (44). Leitch calls the pressure towards resolution the teleological principle. Comparing this to the inconclusive tendency of dreams, he says: "The end (*telos*) implies both a line of development for the plot and a rationale which allows a tragedy, unlike most dreams, to be apprehended upon its conclusion as a unitary whole and for which, in some sense, the work was written" (44). Leitch explains that the teleological principle runs contrary to the discursive principle which tantalizes with enough promise of teleology to keep the audience interested; but works organized according to the discursive principle are essentially "organized ironically, by their indefinite deferral of teleological revelations which seem imminent" (71). He notes that novels may be principally organized along the lines of one or the other of these two principles but usually both impulses are at play. Leitch refers to Lionel Trilling's analysis of the tension in novels between the practicality of the empirical reality of the present moment and the idealistic, tantalizing inner reality with its transformational powers, "tracing it back to *Don Quixote*, which incorporates 'two different and opposed notions of reality'" (92). Leitch observes that

> the circumstantial and idealistic notions of reality underlie respectively the discursive and teleological imperatives. Circumstantial reality, as Trilling points out, is quotidian, unremarkable, and relatively unchanging: it is the nature of the external world, social or sensory, to go on forever. Imaginative or idealistic reality, by contrast, is extraordinary, disruptive, and generally purposive and progressive, issuing most often in dramatic action. (92)

This tendency that Leitch finds peculiar to narrative structure -- "projecting and deferring closure" -- he calls the polytropic principle (94). Whereas Chatman's narrative analysis marginalizes narratives which apparently lack central teleological cohesiveness, Leitch's allows scope for both these and the narratives that eventually yield their discursive resistance to teleology to an eventual conclusion of some sort. Here it needs to be added that many modernist works as well as novels of ideas employ a structural closure rather than a teleological resolution, so that while the discourse is brought to a conclusion, the action and its thematic implications remain unresolved.

Narratology based on the assumption that narrative differs from other forms of expression by being inherently diegetic or mediated through language cancels the oppositional privileging of *diegesis* above *mimesis*, narration above scenic description, objective narration above subjective discourse, content above form, and unity or resolution above disparity and evasion of resolution. This approach provides a basis for analysis of narrative as conditioned by its linguistic manifestation rather than Aristotelian elements modelled on drama, or the epic which it was for so long seen to approximate. But certain features are not taken into account in most narrative studies, such as the effects of irony, satire, mixing of linguistic genres, and other generic aspects that narrow the scope from narratives in general to the novel in particular.

Novel: the Dialogic Genre

Frye and Bakhtin agree that prose literature -- grounded in written language -- constitutes a fourth genre left unidentified since Aristotle's definition of the lyric, epic, and dramatic genres. But whereas Bakhtin prefers 'novel' as the basic generic term, Frye sees the novel as one branch of the 'prose fiction' genre which also includes romance, confession, and Menippean satire or anatomy. These subgenres of 'prose fiction' can mix and mingle variously, says Frye. Frye acknowledges that the term 'fiction' is highly problematic but he is also absolutely against using the term 'novel' to refer to this prose genre because he sees it as the generic term for traditional realism. He argues that when the term 'novel' is applied to all prose narratives, it raises false expectations in response to works that do not conform to realist constructions. Using the term 'novel' in this sense, Frye finds that the principles governing Menippean satire have confounded many a critic when applying "novelistic" measurements to works identifiably of, or influenced by, the Menippean tradition. He mentions the examples of Swift, Peacock, Voltaire, Huxley, Rabelais, Fielding, Sterne, Flaubert, Melville, Joyce, George Eliot in her later novels, and others. Frye prefers the term "anatomy," drawing in his own title *Anatomy of Fiction* upon Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy,* meaning "a dissection or analysis," which he says "expresses very accurately the intellectualized approach of [Burton's] form" (311). The reason for Frye's preference is that, although satiric at times, "the form is not invariably satiric in attitude, but shades off into more purely fanciful or moral discussions, like the *Imaginary Conversations* of Landor or the "dialogue of the Dead" (310). "The purely moral type is a serious vision of society or a single intellectual pattern, in other words a Utopia" (310).

Frye traces this form back to a "Greek cynic named Menippus," through Lucian, Varro, Petronius and Apuleius, saying that "Plato, though much earlier in the field than Menippus, is a strong influence on this type" (309, 310). "The Menippean satirist, dealing with intellectual themes and attitudes," says Frye, "shows his exuberance in intellectual ways by piling up an enormous mass of erudition about his theme or in overwhelming his pedantic targets with an avalanche of their own jargon" (311). This may be done through dialogue or colloquy -- symposium, conversations at a banquet -- or "a symposium of books" may replace dialogue (311). The dissection, analysis, may also take on the form of digressions. The digressions in *Anatomy of Melancholy*, "when examined turn out to be scholarly distillations of Menippean forms ..." (311).

> At its most concentrated, the Menippean satire presents us with a vision of the world in terms of a single intellectual pattern. The intellectual structure

> built up from the story makes for violent dislocations in the customary logic of narrative, though the appearance of carelessness that results reflects only the carelessness of the reader or his tendency to judge by a novel-centered conception of fiction. (310)

Characterization in this form of writing "is not primarily concerned with the exploits of heroes, but relies on the free play of intellectual fancy and the kind of humorous observation that produces caricature" (310). Frye also says:

> The Menippean satire deals less with people as such than with mental attitudes. Pedants, bigots, cranks, parvenues, virtuosi, enthusiasts, rapacious and incompetent professional men of all kinds, are handled in terms of their occupational approach to life as distinct from their social behavior. The Menippean satire thus resembles the confession in its ability to handle abstract ideas and theories, and differs from the novel in its characterization, which is stylized rather than naturalistic, and presents people as mouthpieces of the ideas they represent. There again no sharp boundary lines can or should be drawn .... (309)

Frye points out that both forms of characterization can co-exist in one novel: "Squire Western belongs to the novel, but Thwackum and Square have Menippean blood in them" (309). They are examples of "the *philosophus gloriosus*" and Frye explains that "[t]he novelist sees evil and folly as social diseases, but the Menippean satirist sees them as diseases of the intellect, as a kind of maddened pedantry which the *philosophus gloriosus* at once symbolizes and defines" (309).

Writers who lean towards the tradition of Menippean satire or anatomy tend in Frye's opinion to fare poorly at the hands of critics who deal with their style and thought. But "very little has been made of them as craftsmen working in a specific medium ..." -- Peacock, for instance, being written off as "a slapdash eccentric" (308-9). Frye adds:

"Actually, he is as exquisite and precise an artist in his medium as Jane Austen is in hers" (309). But the form has merged with the novel, says Frye:

> It was Sterne, however, the disciple of Burton and Rabelais, who combined them with greatest success. *Tristram Shandy* may be ... a novel, but the digressing narrative, the catalogues, the stylizing of character along "humor" lines, the marvellous journey of the great nose, the symposium discussions, and the constant ridicule of philosophers and pedantic critics are all features that belong to the anatomy. (312)

And when the Mennippean satire/anatomy merges with the novel (confession and romance may also figure) it "produc[es] various hybrids including the *roman à these* and novels in which the characters are symbols of social and other ideas, like the proletarian novels of the thirties in this century" (312). The elements which Frye identifies as belonging to Menippean satire or anatomy figure large in Bakhtin's definition of the novelistic genre.

Similar to Frye, Bakhtin insists in *The Dialogic Imagination* that the novel stands separate as a fourth genre, an addition to the Aristotelian division of lyric, epic, and drama. The novel is grounded in written language; it "is younger than writing and the book," says Bakhtin, "organically receptive to ... reading" and "has no canon of its own, as do other genres, only individual examples of the novel are historically active, not a generic canon as such" (3). Its distinguishing generic trait is a specific way of viewing reality in language and of using language -- critical as well as self-critical. Dialogue is the language component that Bakhtin uses as the model for his analysis of the novel -- *heteroglossia* -- the language of an other:

> there are no "neutral" words and forms -- words and forms that can belong to "no one"; language has been completely taken over, shot through with intentions and accents. For any individual consciousness living in it, language is not an abstract system of normative forms but rather a concrete heteroglot conception of the world....

> As a living, socio-ideological concrete thing, as heteroglot opinion, language, for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. ... Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions; it is populated -- overpopulated -- with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process. (293-94)

In the novel, Bakhtin argues, the dialogic nature of language comes to the fore in its content as well as form; its expropriation of levels of language and "points of view on the world" other than the author's "creates new and significant artistic potential in discourse, creates the potential for a distinctive art of prose, which has found its fullest and deepest expression in the novel" (293, 275). Bakhtin describes the generic peculiarities of the novel:

> The novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organized. The internal stratification of any single national language into social dialects, characteristic group behavior, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generations and age groups, tendentious languages, languages of the authorities, of various circles and of passing fashions, languages that serve the specific sociopolitical purposes of the day, even of the hour (each day has its own slogan, its own vocabulary, its own emphases) -- this internal stratification present in every language at any given moment of its

> historical existence is the indispensable prerequisite for the novel as a genre. The novel orchestrates all its themes, the totality of the world of objects and ideas depicted and expressed in it, by means of the social diversity of speech types [*raznorecie*] and by the differing individual voices that flourish under such conditions. Authorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional unities with whose help heteroglossia [*raznorecie*] can enter the novel; each of them permits a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships (always more or less dialogized). These distinctive links and interrelationships between utterances and languages, this movement of the theme through different languages and speech types, its dispersion into the rivulets and droplets of social heteroglossia, its dialogization -- this is the basic distinguishing feature of the stylistics of the novel. (262-63)

In order to comprehend the generic nature of the novel, Bakhtin asserts, both form and content must be regarded. He says that "the study of verbal art can and must overcome the divorce between an abstract 'formal' approach and an equally abstract 'ideological' approach. Form and content in discourse are one, once we understand that verbal discourse is a social phenomenon ..." (259). Abstractions of the minimal units of sequential or grammatical structures based on Saussure's framework of minimal differences in phonemes are too narrow to capture the complex levels of dialogue in the novel. Like Aristotelian poetics, Bakhtin argues, this approach has "sought first and foremost for *unity* in diversity" (274). "This exclusive 'orientation towards unity'" amounts to failure to recognize theoretically "the decentralizing tendencies in the life of language, or [the verbal genres] that were in any case too fundamentally implicated in heteroglossia" as well as

> the specific feel for language and discourse that one gets in stylizations, in *skaz*, in parodies and in various forms of verbal masquerade, "not talking straight," and in the more complex artistic forms for the organization of contradiction, forms that orchestrate their themes by means of languages -- in all characteristic and profound models of novelistic prose, in Grimmelhausen, Cervantes, Rabelais, Fielding, Smollett, Sterne and others. (274-75)

The novel does have the capacity to bring out the heteroglossia of language -- to provide a common plane for the multiplicity of languages, genres, and points of view -- yet this unity is always undercut by heteroglossia, Bakhtin argues:

> all languages of heteroglossia, whatever the principle underlying them and making each unique, are specific points of view on the world, forms for conceptualizing the world in words, specific world views, each characterized by its own objects, meanings and values. As such they all may be juxtaposed to one another, mutually supplement one another, contradict one another and be interrelated dialogically. As such they encounter one another and co-exist in the consciousness of real people -- first and foremost, in the creative consciousness of people who write novels. As such, these languages live a real life, they struggle and evolve in an environment of social heteroglossia. Therefore they are all able to enter into the unitary plane of the novel, which can unite in itself parodic stylizations of generic languages, various forms of stylizations and illustrations of professional and period-bound languages, the languages of particular generations, of social dialects and others (as occurs, for example, in the English comic novel). They may all be drawn in by the novelist for the orchestration

> of his themes and for the refracted (indirect) expression of his intentions and values. (291-92)

The novel, "combining of languages and styles into a higher unity is unknown to ... [t]he traditional scholar," says Bakhtin: "He transposes a symphonic (orchestrated) theme on to the piano keyboard" (263).

But the correspondence is not complete; Bakhtin separates the novel from drama, the epic, and the lyric. However, "[i]n an era when the novel reigns supreme," says Bakhtin,

> almost all the remaining genres are to a greater or lesser extent "novelized": drama (for example, Ibsen, Hauptmann, the whole of Naturalist drama), epic poetry (for example, *Childe Harold* and especially Byron's *Don Juan*), even lyric poetry (as an extreme example, Heine's lyric verse). (5-6)

Novelization of other genres occurs when individual works become engaged in "a special kind of 'generic criticism'" of the genre they belong to but parody: "Those genres that stubbornly preserve their old canonic nature begin to appear stylized" (5, 6). Bakhtin insists in particular upon a fundamental generic difference between epic and novel, understandably, since the novel was added as a modern extension to the Aristotelian category of epic rather than as a genre in its own right. In contrast to the novel's concern "with unfinished, still evolving contemporary reality (the openended present)," Bakhtin sees the "national epic" as concerned with "epic past -- in Goethe's and Schiller's terminology the 'absolute past'"; the novel is concerned with "personal experience" but the epic with "national tradition"; "an absolute distance separates the epic world from contemporary reality," from "the author and his audience"; the fictional world and vision in epic are elevated, but prosaic in the novel (13). But heteroglossia, above all, sets the novel apart from the epic (as well as the lyric):

> The crucial distinction between [the novelistic hero] and the epic hero is to be found in the fact that the hero of a novel not only acts but talks, too, and his action has no shared meaning for the community, is not uncontested and takes place not in an uncontested epic world where all meanings are shared. Such action therefore always requires some ideological qualification, there is always some ideological position behind it and it will not be the only one possible; such a position is therefore always open to contest. (334)

As opposed to the heteroglossia of the novel, the discourse of the epic "is a single unitary authorial discourse," making no distinction between the vision of the author and that of the hero; between the author and the epic vision (334).

The novel's capacity for dialogic interaction between the author and/or components of the narrative sets the novel apart from the other genres which present a unitary vision, unitary discourse. But not all novels fulfill the genre's potential for capturing heteroglossia, Bakhtin points out; some lack "the internal dialogism of double-voiced discourse" and offer only the "unity of smooth, pure single-voiced language (perhaps accompanied by a primitive, artificial, worked-up double-voicedness)" (326, 327). Bakhtin explains: "Oppositions between individuals are only surface upheavals of the untamed elements in social heteroglossia ...," whereas internal dialogism involves the complexity of motivation, social roles, desires, world view, feelings and other "elements that play *on* such individual opposition" and are manifested in "a more fundamental speech diversity" (326). Single-voiced novels are purged of "speech diversity" -- they eliminate "the fundamental heteroglossia inherent in actual language" -- replacing it with "ennobled language," with the intent of "'making language respectable,'" and they show: "thus should every respectable person think, talk, and write," or "'every refined and sensitive man does thus and so ...,' etc." (326, 385, 383). "At its heart lies a certain *pose* of respectability, which it consistently assumes in all situations, vis-a-vis low reality," says Bakhtin: "But this respectable pose, for all its unity and relentless consistency, is purchased at the price of polemical abstraction and is therefore inert, static and moribund" (385).

This line of novels Bakhtin traces back to the "so-called Sophistic novels" which employ an abundance of stylistic variation and incorporated genres, such as "description," "embedded stories, rhetorical speeches ..., letters, and developed forms of dialogue," but these "strive to be definitive and exhaustive" (373). "All these elements are treated in Sophistic novels as if they were *equally* intentional and *equally* conventional: they all exist on the same verbal and semantic plane; they are all used to express, directly and with equal force, the intentions of the author" (373). These novels "had a powerful influence on the higher generic types of the European novel up until the nineteenth century" (372). Amongst the examples that Bakhtin gives of this line of novels -- novels that "canonize the absolute rupture between language and material" -- are pastoral novels and the chivalric romance, marked by "popularity and approachability" (380, 381).

> The chivalric romance in prose sets itself against the "low," "vulgar" heteroglossia of all areas of life and counterbalances to it its own specifically idealized, "ennobled" discourse. Vulgar, nonliterary discourse is saturated with low intentions and crude emotional expressions, oriented in a narrowly practical direction, overrun with petty philistine associations and reeks of specific contexts. The chivalric romance opposes to all this its own discourse, linked only with the highest and noblest associations, filled with references to lofty contexts (historical, literary, scholarly). (383-84)

The Baroque novel, Bakhtin argues, continues in this line but the "social disorientation of the abstract romance of chivalry is replaced by the marked social and political orientation of the Baroque novel" (386). The "source" of the Baroque novel "is still not" "contemporary reality" and it is marked by idealization, heroicism, exoticism: "oriental subjects were no less widespread than ancient or medieval subjects" (386-87). But it does "utilize a diversity of alien material for purposes of self-expression and self-representation" and finds a "new formula ... for relating to material ..." (387). "Almost all categories of the modern novel have their origin in one or another of its aspects," says Bakhtin: it utilizes artistically the encyclopaedic wealth of styles, genres, and structural features that characterize this line of novel (387-88).

The "First Stylistic Line of the novel" tends towards elevation -- idealization, consistent rhetorical flourishes, or refinement in language; the "Second" incorporates such features into heteroglossia by assigning them to characters "for whom this language is appropriate" (383). Instead of using consistent literary or aesthetic authorial language, this line "transforms them into authentic characters"; "into 'literary people' with their literary way of thinking and their literary ways of doing things" and "a speaking person who happens to be an ideologue for aestheticism, who exposes convictions that then are subjected in the novel to contest" (383, 333). Bakhtin traces the Second Stylistic Line back to the Socratic dialogue, forms of satire (Menippean, Lucillian, Varronian), and other "serio-comical genres," as well as "the so-called 'fourth drama,' ... the satyr play," through "parodia sacra," "comic beast epics," "the Renaissance novel" (22, 26, 53, 71, 75, 80). This line realizes the generic potential of the novel in full.

The speaking person is central to the novel as a genre, according to Bakhtin: "the human being in the novel is first, foremost and always a speaking human being; the novel requires speaking persons bringing with them their own unique ideological discourse, their own language" (332). Bakhtin continues:

> But in a novel, of course, the speaking person is not all that is represented, and people themselves need not be represented *only* as speakers. No less than a person in drama or in epic, the person in a

> novel may *act* -- but such action is always highlighted by ideology, is always harnessed to the character's discourse (even if that discourse is as yet only a potential discourse), is associated with an ideological motif and occupies a definite ideological position. The action and individual act of a character in a novel are essential in order to expose -- as well as test -- his ideological position, his discourse. (333-34)

All objects, actions, characters, speech, etc., all of these are verbally constructed images in the novel, Bakhtin points out, and the "speaking person's discourse in the novel is not merely transmitted or reproduced; it is, precisely, *artistically represented* and thus -- in contrast to drama -- it is represented *by means of* (authorial) discourse" (332). The text of a novel is an authorial display text but it may also be more than that: "certain aspects of language directly and immediately express (as in poetry) the semantic and expressive intentions of the author" in infinitely varying degrees because other aspects of a novel's language "refract these intentions"; in other instances a novel's language is "completely denied any authorial intentions: the author does not express *himself* in them (as the author of the word) -- rather, he *exhibits* them as a unique speech-thing, they function for him as something completely reified" (299). The novel may thus range from a combination of the author's self-expression and textual display to being purely the author's textual display. And the "speaking person," likewise, may range from relatively pure authorial language (single point of view, style of expression, intent of expression, etc.), in instances of the First Stylistic line of novel; to a whole stratum ranging from novels where the author's language appears intermixed with the characters in the discourse, the author's language providing "a dialogizing background, the special resonance of novelistic discourse"; to novels where language takes the material form of narrators and characters, where the author's point of view may provide a dialogizing background or may be entirely absent (332, 299).

The distancing effect of comedy and stylization is central to Bakhtin's vision of the novel:

> A comic play with languages, a story "not from the author" (but from a narrator, posited author or character), character speech, character zones and lastly various introductory or framing genres are the basic forms for incorporating and organizing heteroglossia in the novel. All these forms permit languages to be used in ways that are indirect, conditional, distanced. (323)

The internal dialogization of languages in the novel is accomplished by three basic means: "hybridizations," "the dialogized interrelation of languages," and "pure dialogues" and "monologues" (364-65). In hybridizations, observations, although not formally demarcated from the discourse (by quotation marks), may actually belong to a specific character or public opinion, depicting their consciousness guised in authorial commentary (359). This conscious double voicedness may be stable, "an artistic representation of another's linguistic style, an artistic image of another's language," framed by authorial discourse (362). Examples of this kind of mixture of two individualized utterances are free indirect speech and descriptions that are coloured by the vocabulary of particular characters (305). In "variation," on the other hand, the distance between the consciousness of the author and the characters varies (363). In a series of utterances the author's position may shift, sometimes being distant from, sometimes in apparent accord with the consciousness to which the utterances belong, but then an utterance belonging purely to the author may appear and thus bring about "authorial unmasking" (304). But sometimes there is no "authorial unmasking," no clear indication of the author's attitude, although the shifting parody is evidently aimed at revealing the inadequacy of an individual consciousness or public opinion (309).

This form of heteroglossia is inherently different from "other forms that are defined by their use of a personified and concretely posited author (written speech) or teller" (314). In "the dialogized interrelation of languages," "the narrator's story or the story of the posited author is structured against the background of normal literary language, the expected literary horizon" (314).

> This interaction, this dialogic tension between two languages and two belief systems, permits authorial intentions to be realized in such a way that we can acutely sense their presence at every point in the work. The author is not to be found in the language of the narrator, not in the normal literary language to which the story opposes itself (although a given story may be closer to a given language) -- but rather, the author utilizes now one language, now another, in order to avoid giving himself up wholly to either of them; he makes use of this verbal give-and-take, this dialogue of languages at every point in his work, in order that he himself might remain as it were neutral with regard to language, a third party in a quarrel between two people (although he might be a *biased* third party). (314)

Pure dialogue and monologue also enter heteroglossia:

> how [characters] speak is verbally and semantically autonomous; each character's speech possesses its own belief system, since each is the speech of another in another's language; thus it may also refract authorial intentions and consequently may to a certain degree constitute a second language for the author. ... Thus even when there is no comic element, no parody, no irony and so forth, where there is no narrator, no posited author or narrating character, speech diversity and language stratification still serve as the basis for style in the novel. ... Substantial masses of this language are drawn into the battle between points of view, value judgements and emphases that the characters introduce into it; they are infected by mutually contradictory intentions

> and stratifications; words, sayings, expressions, definitions and epithets are scattered throughout it, infected with others' intentions with which the author is to some extent at odds, and through which his own personal intentions are refracted. ... We acutely sense in various aspects of his language varying degrees of the presence of the author and of his *most recent semantic instantiation.* (315-16)

Not only speech but also the symbol partakes of the double voice in a novel, setting it apart from poetry: "the dual meaning (or multiple meaning) of the symbol never brings in its wake dual accents" in poetry; "one voice, a single-accent system is fully sufficient to express poetic ambiguity" (328). A symbol in the novel points in two directions simultaneously, apart from being open and ambiguous: it relates to character(s) in one way and to the author and his expressive intention in another and entirely different way.

> To understand the difference between ambiguity in poetry and double-voicedness in prose, it is sufficient to take any symbol and give it an ironic accent (in a correspondingly appropriate context, of course), that is, to introduce into it one's own voice, to refract within it one's own fresh intention. (328)

Bakhtin's generic theory of the novel seems particularly well suited to analyzing novels of ideas, both as a specific genre and within the context of other novels -- realist, modernist, postmodernist, etc. Indeed, according to Bakhtin, the critical and parodic line of novels is likely to adopt the dominant generic trend at each given time and modify, stylize, or satirize its characteristics. Bakhtin's definitions of the novel as a genre and the novelization of other genres assume that there is a generic uniqueness that reaches its fullest expression in novels; and this uniqueness is a critical awareness demonstrated in the complex dialogic interaction of languages, genres, and speaking persons. Bakhtin clearly differentiates the medium and the method of the novel from other narratives: the novel belongs to the verbal presentation of writing and it is a polemic form, although characterized by "not talking straight." The novelist does not express her or his view directly but through the stylized verbal imagery of language, character, object, incorporated genres, extra-artistic language, etc., all of which refract the author's expression in a dialogic and often parodic or satiric interaction which reflects a critical as well as a self-critical view.

The words 'ideas' and 'ideology,' when used by Bakhtin, take on a meaning different from the one assigned to them in studies influenced by New Criticism. Rather than seeing ideas as something abstract and divorced from the speaking, thinking, feeling, acting subject of discourse, Bakhtin sees ideology as the axiom of difference, the potential for conflict of human interests. Ideology in Bakhtin's analysis is the mainspring of characterization through speech, thoughts and actions, plot, narration, the various kinds of authorial 'intrusions'; and each genre of language in a novel, as in life, carries with it a certain ideology, a certain way of viewing the world. And ideology in this sense is as important in novels where the author does not express herself or himself as where the author is visible and becomes a point of reference in the novel's patterns of differentiation, interaction, and conflict of world views. Furthermore, Bakhtin's main theoretical premise is that form correlates to content. He demonstrates how the whole strata of double-voicedness shapes a novel, lending multiplicity to novels where heteroglossia is fully realized, uniformity where it is absent except as a deliberately excluded background.

The critical framework that Bakhtin's socio-linguistic theory of the novel sets up is particularly well suited to analyzing world views, values, modes of being, motivation, aesthetics, and other such features in a novel that carry with them the potential of conflict. Bakhtin's bias is towards novels that actualize this potential through discourse, stylized renderings of speech and other forms of verbal expression, as well as through imagery or symbols. Novels which actualize this potential demarcate and stratify the value-laden point of view or motivation of the author and/or the characters, as well as of different inserted genres. This framework is, item, well suited to analyzing novels in general but it is in particular suited to analyzing novels of ideas.

Chapter 3

NOVELS OF IDEAS

The main task in this chapter is to propose an analytical framework for novels of ideas, drawing upon some of the studies reviewed in chapter two, in particular Bakhtin's concept of dialogization. First I will adopt F. K. Stanzel's definition of 'deep' and 'surface' structures and apply it to distinguish between novels of ideas and other novels that deal with ideas. Secondly I will delineate common features of characterization in novels of ideas, generally considered one of its most problematic aspects as the critical commentary reviewed in chapter one amptly demonstrates. Thirdly I will outline employment of the grotesque as a device for dismantling hierarchies of values regarded by the author as narrow or false. The relationship between content and form -- the rhetoric of form in novels of ideas -- concludes my proposal of features characteristic to novels of ideas. Dialogization is demonstrable in all of these narrative elements in novels of ideas. In my discussion of these four generic features I will provide examples from a variety of novels in preparation for a more specific analysis in the following section of *Herzog* by Saul Bellow.

Towards a Definition

Bakhtin's theory of the novel has great breadth yet attention to detail; Bakhtin sees ideology as inseparable from language and he sees the novel as a specific form of expression best accomplished through written language -- a form that heightens awareness of the ideology in content and form. Bakhtin's interest is centered on the genre of the novel as a whole and thus he does not specifically separate novels of ideas from other novels. But the basic concepts that Bakhtin develops as peculiar to the novel are particularly relevant to novels of ideas and point towards a way of defining this subgenre. Bakhtin stresses the importance of sensing the dialogizing background of the author's "*most recent* *semantic instantiation*," which constitutes "the intentions and accents of the author"; failing to sense this, "one has failed to understand the work" (316, 314). This kind of dialogizing background corresponds to the concept of 'the implied author.' Yet there is a significant difference between the two: although initially synonymous with Bakhtin's, Booth's 'implied author' has come to be seen as altogether separate from the historical real author. Bakhtin's definition insists authors leave their mark inscribed upon the narrative, albeit variously refracted -- the mark of their consciousness, attitude and intention, indicated through the accents established in organization -- at a specific time and in a given situation: the creation of the text. But as Bakhtin points out, some novels do not reveal the intentions of the author, although they always reveal the author's accents, or authorial selection, as Booth calls it. Martin points out that selection of point of view and access to characters' consciousness is particularly important for controlling the possibilities for interpretation that the text offers (143). And as Bakhtin notes, dialogization in such novels involves not only the point of view but also the values and intentions of the characters.

The structural concepts of 'surface narrative structure' that A. J. Greimas developed from Claude Lévi-Strauss' models of transformational grammar serve to differentiate between "the set of observable signifiers which is the text and the underlying abstractions, such as ideas, values, that "[lie] beneath it and can only be retrieved through a backward retracing of the transformational process," as Rimmon-Kenan notes (10, 13). Point of view and intentions that are either verbalized or demonstrated beyond doubt in the text, by a narrator or characters, belong to the surface structure as observable signifiers; values, ideas, and intentions that have to be abstracted from the text belong to the deep structure as the signified. Stanzel broadens the application of 'deep structure' to include 'the implied author' and Thomas Mann's term 'the spirit of narration':

> The only thing that this expression has in common with that used in transformational generative grammar is that the factors of a narrative structure to which it refers can be made visible only with the help of

> theoretical operations. In contrast to deep structure, the 'surface structure' of an incident of narrative transmission is directly evident to the reader. (16)

Analysis of deep structure can thus be applied to identify the characters' ideology and motivation on the one hand, and the author's on the other, except in the absence of authorial expression of intention where only the characters' ideology and motivation are available for inspection.

These terms and methods of analysis, when combined, serve to distinguish novels of ideas from other novels and define the characteristics that set them apart as a subgenre of the novel. Novels of ideas demonstrate a concern with ideology that is signalled in the surface structure. The ideological concerns are developed through an interaction between the surface structure of the text and deep structure where the author's ideas and attitudes may be discerned in dialogic relation to that of the characters. Novels of ideas evince the author's critical and analytical awareness of the ideological implications of human thought, action, and being in the surface structure of the narrative. Ideas may be identified in novels that are unlikely to be classified as novels of ideas but the ideas are first and foremost imbedded in the deep structure. The ideas in their deep structure are primarily important to the development of the characters' ideology -- or ideas, modes of being, and motivation as revealed in the language that relates to them -- and their ideology unfolds most clearly in situations where it appears in conflict or potential conflict with that of other characters. A brief example of this way of handling ideas in narrative may suffice.

In Ernest Hemingway's short story "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," the heteroglossia that makes it novelistic may be analyzed, as Martin demonstrates in *Recent Theories of Narrative*. There are certain signals in the title of the story and its development that suggest that the author sees Mr. Macomber's eventual capacity for bravery when facing a lion as a transition to manhood and maturity. The perspective of Wilson, the seasoned hunter and hunting guide, therefore carries greater weight than that of the other characters. Martin points out that the narrative gives access to the thoughts of Mr. Macomber and Wilson, the language that identifies their respective social backgrounds as well as their individual attitudes and mode of being (148-49). Martin also points out that the narrative allows no direct access to Mrs. Macomber's thoughts; they are revealed only through her speech and actions (145-46). Martin says:

> In general, our sympathies are enlisted by those whose thoughts we know. Most readers tend to qualify the narrator's characterization of Francis as a "coward" after learning what he thought and felt during the lion hunt. But no such possibility of sympathy exists for Margaret, whose thoughts must remain unrecorded in order to preserve the enigmatic ending. (146)

If the story ended at the point where it has become obvious that Mrs. Macomber has shot her husband to death, the questions raised would be whether or not she killed him accidentally. But Wilson's immediate accusation changes the emphasis of the questions and his interpretation of what happened carries weight because he is the expert on survival: to what extent was the fatal shot not an accident but an act of self-preservation? Mrs. Macomber's failure to deny Wilson's accusation, the lack of information about her shooting skills, and the lack of access to her thoughts at the moment of shooting leaves the story open-ended. Wilson's accusation carries great weight but it is also undermined because his position as a hunting guide is threatened by Mrs. Macomber. She might reveal that he did not follow the safety rules of lion hunting to the letter. And this raises an additional question: to what extent is Wilson's accusation directed by self-preservation rather than a conviction that Mrs. Macomber's shooting of her husband was not entirely accidental? Eventually the story presents the possibilities that the characters may be driven by the same impulses as the lion which attacked when it was threatened. Even the reader is implicated in Hemingway's suggestion that the survival instinct may at times override moral scruples.

The ideas and motives of each character may be analyzed in the deep structure of this short story and the author's ideas may also be identified in relation to theirs. Wilson's view that American men seem to shy away from the full maturity demanded by survival, from taking charge of their lives and responsibility for their actions, seems to coincide with the authorial point of view. In the title, lying outside the action itself but commenting on it, there is a foregrounding of Mr. Macomber's happiness, rising from his initiation into maturity -- manhood. Thus a very subtle authorial statement may be discerned. Hemingway clearly exposes the codes of thought by which the characters operate but the focus of the story and its power does not rest on ideological analysis and assessment of these codes in the surface structure. Human instincts for survival are demonstrated in the surface structure; cultural ideas are also exposed but not specifically accentuated, analyzed or discussed in the surface structure -- instead mostly left to the reader. Whereas the ideological implications of Hemingway's short story require an analysis of its deep structure, novels of ideas also include an analysis or reflection upon ideas in their surface structure and thereby call attention to the critical intent of the author as well as make accessible some of the motivation that provide undercurrents in Hemingway's writing.

Signals of authorial attitude in novels of ideas may be minimal and often limited to an impression of either authorial distance from or authorial empathy for the characters' ideological dilemmas or ponderings. John Barth's novels, for instance, tend to give minimal indication of the author's attitude towards characters and situations. More commonly novels of ideas give an impression of authorial distance or closeness which affects the reading experience. The extent to which the narrative invites empathy for certain or all characters has an effect on the reader's sense of authorial distance or closeness. It also affects how the reader reacts to and interprets the text. Peacock's *Crotchet Castle* and Huxley's *Point Counter Point*, for instance, give totally different impressions of authorial attitude. Both novels present characters who are obsessed with ideas. Peacock's attitude seems to be that this is an endearing human quirk that reality has a tendency to interrupt in one way or another. Huxley's attitude seems to be that the single-minded pursuit of single-minded ideas is potentially harmful to the individual and society. There is a pressure in Peacock's novel to judge his characters lightly but in Huxley's, the pressure is either to judge his characters harshly or to pity them. Albert Camus, to name yet another example, evokes altogether different reactions to *The Fall* and to *The Plague*. The monologue or confession in *The Fall* leaves a strong impression of the speaker's fallen state, not only because he fails to attempt rescue when a fellow human being either throws himself into a river or falls into it, and not only because he has cut himself off from human involvement. Behind the character's monologue we hear another voice, as Bakhtin puts it, that cautions that this is a fallen man speaking. The title is ambiguous and may refer to the man who falls into the river as well as the speaker's fall from humanity. Throughout the text there is an emphasis on 'fall' and 'low': the speaker has moved to Holland, a place he refers to as lower than any country, in fact, well below sea level. There is as great a pressure on the reader to judge the former judge who is the narrator in *The Fall* as there is in *The Plague* not to judge the various characters. Even the character who deliberately causes the plague in the novel is presented with sad sympathy by the narrator, whose dominant quality is humaneness and acceptance of human frailty. The different and implicitly conveyed authorial attitude generated by the surface structure but embedded in the deep structure leaves a lasting impression and is as much an integral part of each novel as the elements developed as observable signifiers in the surface structure.

The significance of the deep structure in novels of ideas is determined by the presence of this consciousness which is not a part of the narrative proper but accentuates it in a way that affects the possibilities that it leaves open for interpretation. But all that is signified is conveyed through the textual signifier. Novels of ideas treat ideas as the very codes that determine individuality and culture. Novels of ideas are inherently dialogic, inherently metaphoric. The authorial voice is inscribed upon the text in dialogue with its disparate narrative elements, disparate formal conventions, disparate evocation of other texts belonging to the culture and their motifs, metaphors and symbols. And the way in which ideas are presented in novels of ideas affects their form. Bakhtin argues that novels that utilize the heteroglossia of language reach the full potential of the genre and that they are marked by multiplicity in form. Novels of ideas tend to draw upon extreme cultural dichotomies or factions, in conventions of thought and literature, to expose the extremes, to gradually dismantle their oppositional power, and eventually to indicate or reestablish a hierarchy based on greater balance.

Ideas Exposed

The shortcomings of stylized characterization are extensively registered in the critical commentary in chapter two above where a strict dividing line is drawn between types, or caricatures, and characters. The assumption seems to be that it follows that when characters are depicted through ideas, they become types, and that types are to be avoided at all costs. The potentials that the use of simple character types offers for narrative examination of ideas and manners are considerable. But the assumption that there is a strict correlation between ideas and types is an oversimplification. The development of characters through ideas may add rather than detract from the reader's understanding of the individual characteristics. If granted distinct speech and world view, credible within the world order of the narrative, the "speaking person" as a narrator or a character will set up a dialogue with the ideology of other individualized characters as well as the authorial voice.

Modern novels of ideas employ varied methods of characterization, but types or flat characters are particularly effective as means to expose ideology. Martin observes that "the division of characters into 'flat' and 'round,' depending on whether they are static or capable of change, might give way to a more flexible conception of the interaction of character and fictional world" (118). The example he gives to back up his argument is Huckleberry Finn:

> Because of his simplicity, Huck Finn might justly be called a flat character; his pangs of conscience, in two short passages in the novel, are prized by those who think round, 'deep' characters are better, and often they cannot conceal their disappointment with his failure to grow. But the prejudice, violence, credulity, conformity, and even the humanity of the world he inhabits would not even be visible if we did not see them through the transparency of Huck's amoral eyes, which strip away the conventions of "sivilization" to reveal what we civilized readers would not otherwise see. If Huck were round, American literature would gain a slightly more interesting character but lose a world. In the case of flat characters who have no new vision to offer, it is often the very intricacy and inevitability of their connections with the reality they inhabit that makes them interesting. (118)

Bakhtin also stresses the importance of certain character types for exposing false or limited ideology. In their pure form the rogue, the clown, and the fool "are life's maskers";

> their entire function consists in externalizing things (true enough, it is not their own being they externalize, but a reflected, alien being -- however, that is all they have). This creates that distinctive means for externalizing a human being, via parodic laughter. (160)

Bakhtin says that these figures have a distinctive "privilege";

> the right to be "other" in this world, the right not to make common cause with any single one of the existing categories that life makes available; none of these categories quite suits them, they see the underside and the falseness of every situation. ... The rogue still has some ties that bind him to real life; the clown and the fool, however, are "not of this world," and therefore possess their own special rights and privileges. These figures are laughed at by others, and themselves as well. (159)

These figures, "transformed in various ways," become the novelist's means "to define the position from which he views life, as well as the position from which he makes that life public" because through them the most private aspects of private life can be made public, externalized, says Bakhtin (161). Their function is compatible with "the most basic task for the novel" which according to Bakhtin is "the laying-bare of any sort of conventionality, the exposure of all that is vulgar and falsely stereotyped in human relationships" (162).

The device of "not understanding" is double-voiced in nature and has the potential to expose life-denying attitudes to life at the same time as it presents life-affirming ones. Bakhtin points out that this device is employed, for instance, by Voltaire, Smollett, Fielding, Swift, Tolstoy:

> deliberate on the part of the author, simpleminded and naive on the part of the protagonists [it] always takes on great organizing potential when an exposure of vulgar conventionality is involved. Conventions thus exposed -- in everyday life, mores, politics, art and so on -- are usually portrayed from the point of view of a man who neither participates in nor understands them. (164) Opposed to convention and functioning as a force for exposing it, we have the level-headed, cheery and clever wit of the rogue (in the form of a villain, a petty townsman-apprentice, a young itinerant cleric, a tramp belonging to no class), the parodied taunts of the clown and the simpleminded incomprehension of the fool. Opposed to ponderous and gloomy deception we have the rogue's cheerful deceit; opposed to greedy falsehood and hypocrisy we have the fool's unselfish simplicity and his healthy failure to understand; opposed to everything that is conventional and false, we have the clown -- a synthetic form for the (parodied) exposure of others. (162)

When these character types are combined and "introduced into the content of the novel as major protagonists (either in direct or transformed guise)," they "almost always" become "the bearer[s] of the authorial point of view," Bakhtin asserts (163).

This function of exposing conventional ideas or dominant ideology as limited and even life denying is intrinsic to the figure of the *eiron* in Greek comedy (from which the word irony is derived) and his counterpart is the *alazon*, whose ideological limitations the *eiron* exposes. In "Shaw and Aristophanes: How the Comedy of Ideas Works," Robert R. Speckhard compares versions of the *eiron* and the *alazon* in works by the two playwrights. The versions of *eiron* he finds in Shaw's works are "the *Eiron*-Buffoon," "the Polite *Eiron*," and "the Ironical-Rogue." Each of these ironic character types, in its own special way, uncovers an unappealing core beneath the smooth and overbearing facade of the *alazon*. The *Eiron*-Buffoon" is "the fellow who ironically pretends to be less than he is, and the *Alazon*, the fellow who foolishly thinks he is more than he is" (83). In "the *Eiron*-Buffoon" there "is real strength effectively masked by apparent 'foolishness' or its equivalent: apparent ineptness, unworldliness, innocuousness" (88). "The Polite *Eirons*," on the other hand, are the embodiment of Socratic irony:

> They do not appear innocuous or helpless or noodleheaded; like Socrates, the sharpness of their intelligence is made amusing by a show of civility. Restless arrogance in their antagonists is frustrated by the quiet, controlled intelligence of these Polite *Eirons*. (88)

"The Ironical Rogue" is the counterpart to a less obvious "arrogant personality -- the complacently conceited" (89). "The complacently conceited are not less conceited than their more vocal cousins," says Speckhard: "For conceit that is not expressed is often more dearly felt than that which is" (89). "The Ironical-Rogue" is "ironical because apparent immorality masks real morality. Such an 'immoral' type is the red flag that makes the complacently conceited articulate their cherished opinions" (89). Speckhard's three character types obviously overlap Bakhtin's but with an added edge: Bakhtin's fools, clowns, and rogues are sincere in their naïve 'unknowing' of the codes they transgress and expose; Shaw's character types, identified by Speckhard, know the codes well enough to expose them -- well enough not to accept them.

Character and Ideas; Codes of Being -- Codes of Thought

But characterization in novels of ideas is not limited to exposing specific ideologies as inadequate to encompass the complexity of human existence; examination of ideas in relation to character also serves to explore human nature. This precisely is what Speckhard finds in the plays of Aristophanes and Shaw. The *eiron* and the *alazon* are two aspects of human nature:

> We follow the exchange of ideas not only with intellectual interest, but also with partisan emotional interest. The Aristophanic and Shavian comedy of ideas is not a debate or discussion, but a confrontation of two different types of personalities in which ideas are weapons. And, as John Gassner would say, we know for what type we are rooting. (92)

Speckhard rejects the view that Shaw was interested only "in a concept of society, but not of man" and that "the action of his plays [is] nothing more than discussion or debate of social problems" (92). Speckhard says:

> Our own analysis supports the conclusion of Eric Bentley that Shaw's central interest was an image of man, his hero a "vital" personality living with a minimum of comfortable, egotistic illustions [sic] to prejudice and cramp his natural goodwill and intelligence. Central in the comic confrontation of Ironist and Impostor is a contrast of personality and character. The *Alazones*, self-deceived impostors, are cramped and prejudiced personalities because they have adopted comfortable, flattering illustions [sic] about their own goodness and wisdom. The strength of Shaw's ironical heroes (Ironical-Buffoons, Polite *Eirons*, Ironical-Rogues)

> lies in their relative freedom from such egotistic illusions. Their intelligence is not warped by prejudice and their spirit is not cramped by conceit. They see things, including themselves, as they are, and they respond to life with goodwill. (92)

Viewed from this angle, Peacock's vision of human nature seems to be that man is an arbitrary creature prone to be led astray by either too idealistic humane schemes or too rational and inhumane schemes, both needing to be tempered by good horse sense. Huxley, on the other hand, presents a darker view, although one otherwise similar to Peacock's. The tendency of many of the characters to use fixed ideological formulas to escape unpleasant aspects of reality or to elevate their self-image is tempered by Rampion. Through him Huxley offers the most positive vision of the potential of human nature. Rampion insists that being human is challenge enough: the body, the senses, the instincts, if attended to in harmony with head and heart, will lead to greater contentment than segmented inhuman ideals. This optimistic vision, which modifies the numerous negative examples, is in turn modified by Elinor Quarles' observation of hereditary traits that control her son's behaviour and her husband's insight that, although he recognizes intellectually the desirability of wholeness in human beings, he may be congenitally incapable of living according to that knowledge.

Milan Kundera approaches his characters, through authorial narration, from the angle of the ideas that direct their being and actions. In *The Art of the Novel*, a collection which includes interviews that Christian Salmon and David Bellos had with Kundera, as well as notes and essays by the novelist, Kundera responds to Salmon's query on his aesthetics in "Dialogue on the Art of the Novel" by saying that his "assertion" is straightforward: his "novels are not psychological. More precisely: They lie outside the aesthetic of the novel normally termed psychological" (23). Kundera is fully aware of the critical and theoretical dicta that underlie the preference for 'showing' rather than 'telling':

> Indeed, two centuries of psychological realism have created some nearly inviolable standards: (1) A writer must give the maximum amount of information about a character: about his physical appearance, his way of speaking and behaving; (2) he must let the reader know a character's past, because that is where all the motives for his present behavior are located; and (3) the character must have complete independence; that is to say, the author with his own considerations must disappear so as not to disturb the reader, who wants to give himself over to illusion and take fiction for reality. (33)

Kundera avoids these standards. Salmon notes in "Dialogue on the Art of the Novel" that descriptions of characters' appearance are minimal in Kundera's novels, that he is "also very parsimonious about [his] characters' past" (35). Kundera explains that this lack of information about background and appearance only applies to Thomas in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being:* "his existential problem is rooted in other themes" (35). The consciousness of Thomas' wife Tereza, on the other hand, Kundera sees as rooted in her body and her mother's past and he supplies details to indicate this (35). Salmon points out in "Dialogue on the Art of Composition" that "there are passages in [Kundera's] novels where [he himself] speaks out directly" (79). Kundera observes in "Notes Inspired by 'The Sleepwalkers'" that he also avoids "the conventional form" of the novel, "grounded exclusively in a character's adventure, and content with a mere narration of that adventure" which "limits the novel, reduces its cognitive capacities" (64). He explains to Salmon in "Dialogue on the Art of Composition": "Whenever a novel abandons its themes and settles for just telling the story, it goes flat" (83). In "Dialogue on the Art of the Novel" Kundera describes his novels as discursive explorations of the interrelations between social history and individual characters' existential problems (37-38).

Kundera explains in "Dialogue on the Art of the Novel" that he approaches his characters through ideas, or their "codes" of being, and the "words" that express these codes. He describes his method as "interrogation" and "meditation":

> As I was writing *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, I realized that the code of this or that character is made up of certain key words. For Tereza: body, soul, vertigo, weakness, idyll, Paradise. For Tomas: lightness, weight. In the part called "Words Misunderstood," I examine the existential codes of Franz and Sabina by analyzing a number of words: woman, fidelity, betrayal, music, darkness, light, parades, beauty, country, cemetery, strength. Each of these words has a different meaning in the other person's existential code. Of course, the existential code is not examined in abstracto; it reveals itself progressively in the action, in the situations. (29-30)

To "apprehend the self" in "the nonpsychological novel" "means to grasp the essence of its existential problem," says Kundera about his own art (29). *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, he says, "is nothing but one long interrogation. Meditative interrogation (interrogative meditation) is the basis on which all my novels are constructed": "The novel is a meditation on existence as seen through the medium of imaginary characters" (31, 83). In the meditative, interrogative passages Kundera reflects upon what quality of being it is that underlies a character's actions, the character's particular way of doing things, offering a word or a term that encompasses the character's peculiarities, analyzing the implications. Kundera says in "Dialogue on the Art of Composition":

> Even if I'm the one speaking, my reflections are connected to a character. I want to think his attitudes, his way of seeing things, in his stead and more deeply than he could do it himself. Part Two of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* begins with a long meditation on the interrelations between the body and the soul. Yes, it is the author speaking, but everything he says is

> valid only within the magnetic field of a character: Tereza. It is Tereza's way of seeing things (though never formulated by her). (79-80)

Kundera explores ideas through character, but above all he explores characters through their individual codes of being, the ideas about themselves and the world that shape their thoughts, speech and action. Kundera notes that when society changes, the manner in which these codes are manifested also changes (35).

Huxley demonstrates a view similar to Kundera's on the relationship between human nature and ideas in *Point Counter Point* and in other writings. In *Letters of Aldous Huxley* he says: "The only really and permanently absorbing things are attitudes towards life and the relation of man to the world" (228). The characters in *Point Counter Point* analyze, attack, and defend their positions. Rampion, in particular, interrogates, challenging other characters' attitude to life. The narrator and Quarles analyze and reflect upon characters' ideas in relation to their actions and in relation to their inner nature. "People are not interested in ideas by choice," says Huxley in a letter: "They are predestined to ideas as they are predestined to a Roman nose" (281). Quarles reflects upon this problem in detail, finding that although he agrees with Rampion that ideally man should live life in its totality with his whole being, his own inherited nature does not allow him Rampion's fullness of expression and experience. Quarles is as incapable of unconditional emotional involvement as Lady Tantamount; he is ruled by the intellect, she is ruled by the body, and neither of them is capable of emotional commitment. In a notebook entry Quarles confesses that he finds it easier to live by intellect than emotion and that his scientific coolness is the path of least resistance. By pursuing only the ideology that their nature dictates, each character in the novel, apart from the Rampions, avoids fulfilling involvement with life. In *Do what You Will* Huxley observes that "it is the fear of the labyrinthine flux and complexity of phenomena that has driven men to philosophy, to science, to theology -- fear of the complex reality driving them to invent a simpler, more manageable, and therefore consoling fiction." Each character, apart from the Rampions, opts for the "consoling fiction" to which their inner nature directs them. Huxley's novel is thus as much an examination and exposure of human nature as it is of cultural ideas: it is a criticism of man's willingness to choose the path of least resistance in life and rationalize that choice with ideological rationalizations. Immaturity, madness, intellectual pursuits are easier options than the art of living life in its totality, Quarles observes in a notebook entry, and the development of the novel bears out the validity of his observation.

All of the forms of characterization discussed so far call attention by some means to the constructed nature of the characters; they are narrative artifacts. The mixture of simplification and exaggeration in character types like a fool, a clown, a rogue or an *eiron* and an *alazon*, as well as in caricatures and grotesques, have a defamiliarizing effect. Kundera's method of entering the narrative to question and meditate upon the codes and key words that lend shape to his characters' existence has the same effect; Huxley does a similar thing through the voice of the narrator in *Point Counter Point*.. Salmon asks Kundera in "Dialogue on the Art of the Novel": "Doesn't the overly abstract nature of your narration risk making your characters less lifelike?" (33). He but voices a concern that frequently comes up in criticism on novels of ideas: there is the feeling that assessment of exploration of values, attitudes, motives -- in short, of ideology -- in a character and through a character, invariably leads to a devaluation of the character, depriving him or her of verisimilitude. Kundera's response is to mention a few characters from novels he considers great to demonstrate that lack of information about physical appearance or background does not make a character less memorable (33-34). He continues:

> A character is not a simulation of a human being. It is an imaginary being. An experimental self. In that way the novel reconnects with its beginnings. Don Quixote is practically unthinkable as a living being. And yet, in our memory, what character is more alive? ... [L]ack of information does not make [a character] less "living." Because making a character "alive" means: getting to the bottom of his existential problem. Which in turns means:

> getting to the bottom of some situations, some motifs, even some words that shape him. ... Man and the world are bound together like the snail to its shell: the world is part of man, it is his dimension, and as the world changes, existence (*in-der-Welt-sein*) changes as well. (34, 35)

Leitch is much of the same mind as Kundera on character. He asserts that a character can be "compelling without ever being believable" (162). Leitch argues:

> What makes most characters tellable, however -- and this rule applies to Virgil, Chaplin, Huck Finn, and Dmitri Karamazov -- is subtraction rather than addition, the presentation of a character in terms of a type which is ultimately inadequate, or in terms of a role which is obscurely or incompletely defined.
>
> Even the simplest characters begin to take on the illusion of life when their relation to their function or role is defined negatively. (159)

Leitch asserts that a character which is not presented exhaustively appeals to the readers' imagination -- their power to complete a suggestive sketch:

> Even a character not literally reprised can assume the illusion of life -- that is, can arouse expectations based on more than his reported circumstances and behavior -- if he incarnates a recognizable type like Molière's elderly husbands, James Thurber's wives and dogs, and characters in the commedia dell'arte or the Punch and Judy show. Such characters seem by their qualities to invoke a previous life rather than comprising merely a series of details or attitudes. (161)

But incomplete or sketchy characterization is not peculiar to character types alone; inexhaustiveness is what makes all characters tellable, Leitch says:

> Novelists provide us with a record of their characters' thoughts which is voluminous but not exhaustive. We recover the characters precisely by generalizing or extrapolating the exemplary thoughts we are given to cover

> the passage of years, the subjects which arise only briefly … or not at all …, or the dimensions of experience which are not specified but which we take for granted…. (160)

All characters are reducible to narrative artifacts, abstractions, simplifications, according to Leitch:

> Character in general is the result of the storyteller's sleight-of-hand, and most characters are analytically reducible to constellations of external details, mental attitudes, dramatic roles, and covert appeals to the audience to fill a discontinuity or form an identification. Indeed it is not going too far to say that all tellable characters are based ultimately on identification. (162)

Essentially, the feature distinguishing lifelike characters from characters that risk the judgement of falling short of verisimilitude is the extent to which the reader is made consistently aware that they are narrative artifacts. Stylization of character and authorial narrative commentary on character, alike, put degrees of distance between the reader and the character, and these degrees in turn allow scope for dispassionate contemplation.

Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* shows particularly well the necessity of some kind of distancing effect to place the critical emphasis on the system of values rather than on individual characters. Instead of using Huxley's method of gradually narrowing and distorting characters during the course of the novel, Atwood uses the opposite method. Offred's impression of the members of her new household are to begin with hostile and laced with irony. Atwood plays Offred's initial stereotypical conception of the Commander and his Wife as narrow but threatening figures of authority against her gradual knowledge and understanding of them as individuals. Offred is convinced that her survival depends upon knowing her enemy and during her narrative she is as alert to her own potential to be her own enemy as she is to others which lends the single narrative voice a double perspective. As a result her own culpability emerges with increasing clarity at the same time as her attitude towards the Commander and his Wife progresses from hostile ironic distance to empathy and insight. Each new bit of information calls for Offred's reinterpretation of her own situation and of others but rather than cancelling previous judgements, her reconsiderations modify them and fill out the the complexities that underlie the different facades. Atwood's method is powerful and in a way she redefines the significance of types within a realistic context, indicating that initial judgements of others based on observation rather than interaction and communication are likely to be typecasting without the sense of depth that comes from familiarity. Offred's part in the downfall of the Commander and his Wife reverses the role of victim and victimizer and the final glimpse of them shows them as pathetic and in ironic contrast to their initially threatening inscrutability. A narrative of a central consciousness, Offred's tale evokes strong readerly affinities with her as a character and her dilemma. Atwood's conclusion which turns out to be a frame for Offred's narrative has the double function of providing contextual details which she could not realistically have access to and of providing the kind of distancing effect that places the emphasis more broadly on the trends in thought and values depicted in the novel and their relation to contemporary society.

Stylization of character is particularly effective for exposing and exploring ideas but the assumption that characters who serve the author as the means to examine ideas invariably makes them types or simple embodiments of ideas is a gross oversimplification which seems to arise in part from the peculiar assumption that intellect and thought do not belong to literary or human reality. And types or caricatures do not always remain stable constructs in novels of ideas; a character may be gradually narrowed into a type or a caricature may be transformed into a more fully developed character. This kind of management of character and type is of great importance in the narrative development of novels of ideas.

The Grotesque: Ideas Exposed, Dismantled, Reconstructed

'A grotesque' as a term referring to a specific kind of character type in relation to thought is quite different from the hyperbolic, quixotic and life-affirming use of the grotesque as a dismantling device. In both cases there is an underlying vision of the totality of human existence but in the character type this vision remains in the dialogizing background instead of being dramatized in the surface structure. A character portrayed as a grotesque is limited: it is confined to a single vision, a single mode of being. In "The Book of the Grotesque," the first story in *Winesburg, Ohio*, Sherwood Anderson portrays a writer who recollects all of the people he has known as grotesques (44). The narrator of the story perceives "one central thought" in the writer's "The Book of the Grotesque," which was never published:

> That in the beginning when the world was young there were a great many thoughts but no such thing as a truth. Man made the truths himself and each truth was a composite of a great many vague thoughts. All about in the world were the truths and they were all beautiful. . . .
>
> And then the people came along. Each as he appeared snatched up one of the truths and some who were quite strong snatched up a dozen of them.
>
> It was the truths that made the people grotesques. The old man had quite an elaborate theory concerning the matter. It was his notion that the moment one of the people took one of the truths to himself, called it his truth, and tried to live his life by it, he became a grotesque and the truth he embraced became a falsehood. (45)

Anderson presents the characters in *Winesburg, Ohio* as ruled by dominant traits or desires but he does not apply the grotesque specifically to ideological examination; the stories are held together by the theme of truth and falsehood, the characters' success or failure in recognizing the truth about themselves or others. But the grotesque as a character locked within a single mode of being is an effective method of portraying an unsatisfactory, because limited, vision of life. Huxley does this in *Point Counter Point*. The characters not only "reel off neatly formulated notions," as Quarles observes; they also live by these formulations. As Meckier and Hoffman note, Huxley employs these "monstrous" grotesques to assess currents of thought. And, conversely, the characters become grotesque precisely by designing their thoughts and lives along the lines of fixed ideologies. Huxley uses a method that Quarles compares to a musical theme developed in a novel through a contrapuntal plots, gradually and subtly pushed out of shape and deformed.

Trends of religious, scientific, philosophical, and aesthetic thought, to count a few, distort most of the characters' vision of themselves as well as others in *Point Counter Point*. Most of the characters seek to be more than human, as Rampion points out, and in doing so they become less than human, foolish or vile, hurting others as they themselves hurt within. Most of the characters fantasize about greatness, mostly martyrdom: Lady Tantamount in her sexual encounters; Mr. Quarles in his conviction that in him a great philosopher went unheeded; Marjory Bidlake in her flight into "God's bliss," convincing herself that her husband's betrayal was the pain necessary to achieve that bliss; and Spandrell seems to commit murder and suicide due to a mad vision of self-aggrandizement and martyrdom.

Caricature and the grotesque have immense potential for defamiliarization of familiar ideas and attitudes. Caricature, as Peacock amply demonstrates, relies on exaggeration of the latent absurdities of specific attitudes and intellectual poses. It also gives scope for rapid, comic shifts from sense to nonsense, even sense in nonsense. Each character in *Crotchet Castle* has his or her own frame of ideas and attitudes and applies it to every subject and situation that comes up, no matter how far fetched the connection is. Often the outcome is ridiculous, but as Hewitt points out, "[m]ost of the characters are allowed to score some good points" (154). Hewitt also points out:

> Folliott stands for 'moderation' or 'good sense.' He, more than any other character, is associated with food and drink, the things farthest from pure

> ideas, the things about which there can be no argument, and, though we could envisage the monotonous truncation of argument by food and drink as savage criticism, we are not likely to do so in *Crotchet Castle*. (157)

Indeed, this aspect of Folliott is not "savage criticism" but an affirmation that the body matters as much as the mind. And although not "savage" as criticism, Folliott's frequent reminders of food and drink, eagerly attended to by the other characters, serve to bring to earth the flights of fancy and wit. Dr. Folliott's attention to the body, commonly regarded as the 'lower order' of human existence, is parallelled by his sympathy for the 'lower orders' of society who, he suggests, have been brought to mutiny by inequality. The body and the poor alike resist suppression and seek to correct imbalance, whether it be of overemphasis on intellect or too extreme economic imbalance amply stressed by the wealth of food and drink on the tables of the wealthy in *Crotchet Castle* while the angry masses marching outside the mansions and castles go without. Although Folliott sympathizes with the plight of the masses and satirizes the spokesmen for the economic 'reform' that has led to an uprising, he has, however, no sympathy for their methods of retaliation, their invasion of people's homes to plunder whatever they will. Thus when they gather on Christmas Day outside Chainmail Hall, demanding anything that may be used as weapons, Folliott will hear nothing of acceding to their demands. He leads the group gathered there for festivities to battle the assailants with the same vigour as he enters verbal battle and attacks food and drink. This affirmation of the body in counterpoint to the mind, and the poor in counterpoint to the rich, variously modified and parodied, has decided overtones of the grotesque as Bakhtin defines it in the works of Rabelais. Indeed, *Crotchet Castle* abounds in references to Rabelais. The grotesque is in a way a special kind of caricature.

Application of the grotesque in the Rabelaisian manner has a certain deconstructive power: it dismantles and rearranges conventional hierarchies of values, Bakhtin argues, affirming the profound in the profane, revitalization in decay (177). Bakhtin says "Rabelais -- a humanist physician and pedagogue -- was concerned with direct propaganda on behalf of the culture of the body and its harmonious development" in opposition to the "one that ignored the body" (177). Rabelais presents the various representatives and manifestations of the denial of the body as essentially hypocritical, through grotesque images of overindulgence in food and drink despite avowed preference for spiritual values and physical renunciation, amongst monks for instance (185). And the underlying life denial manifested in "all the ideological monsters of a transcendent world view" Rabelais presents through grossly grotesque images of "bodily deformities and perversions" (175-76). These images

> are aimed primarily at destroying the established hierarchy of values, at bringing down the high and raising up the low, at destroying every nook and cranny of the habitual picture of the world. But simultaneously he is accomplishing a more positive task, one that gives all these word-linkages and grotesque images a definite direction: to "embody" the world, to materialize it, to tie everything in to spatial and temporal series, to measure everything on the scale of the human body, to construct -- on that space where the destroyed picture of the world had been -- a new picture. (185)

Also through use of "grotesque exaggeration" Rabelais presents a "basically affirmative view of the significance, the culture of eating and drinking"; not in order to celebrate "gluttony and drunkenness," but in order to celebrate man's physical being:

> he does affirm the lofty importance of eating and drinking in human life, and strives to justify them ideologically, to make them respectable, to erect a culture for them. The transcendental ascetic world view had deprived them of any affirmative value, had taken them as nothing more than a sad necessity of the sinful flesh; such a world view knew only one formula for making such processes respectable, and that was the fast -- a negative form, hostile to their nature, dictated not by love but by enmity (cf. the figure of "King Lent," the faster, as the typical offspring of "Antiphysis"). (185)

Rabelais draws all aspects of physical human existence into his grotesque repatterning:

> He re-structures the picture of the world, materializes it and fleshes it out. The traditional image of the human being in literature is also re-structured in a radical way; moreover, it is re-structured in a way that benefits the "unofficial" and extraverbal areas of his life. The whole man is brought out on the surface and into the light, by means of the word, in all the events of his life. But throughout all this the human being is not deheroicized or debased at all, nor does he in any sense become a man of "low life." We might say rather than in Rabelais there is a heroization of all the functions of the life of the body, of eating, drinking, defecating and sexual activity. The very hyperbolization of these acts contributes to their heroization; they lose their commonplace quality, their everyday and naturalistic coloration. (192)

Even death is allotted a different position in the Rabelaisian world. Alongside scenes of death Rabelais offers scenes of "triumphant life," even combining them: characters die of laughter, for instance, and when Pantagruel is born his mother dies so that Gargantua does not know whether to mourn or celebrate; he ends up howling alternately with grief and laughter (195-96). The vision of life that Bakhtin finds in character depiction through grotesque images in Rabelais and "other representative figures of the Renaissance" is "the wholeness of a triumphant life, a whole that embraces death, and laughter, and food and sexual activity" (198-99).

Points of Reference in Narrative Development and Organization

The polemical nature of novels of ideas affects their form. They belong to Bakhtin's category of the Second Stylistic Line of the novel, in that they present more than one consistent point of view on the narrative world. Authorial intent and attitude towards the central ideas as well as the manner of their presentation informs novels of ideas. My sketching out of the various strategies for exposing and developing ideological implications through character indicates the importance of narrative management, organization. As Bakhtin points out, the speaking person is essential for exposure, assessments, and reassessments of the ideology inscribed upon language. A variety of narrative situations lend themselves to generating analytical speech and multiplying perspectives: the narrative motif of Table-Talk, which gathers together a number of characters and different opinions, may be found in Peacock and Robertson Davies alike; as Hoffman notes on Huxley, variations upon conversations may be complemented with note-books, letters, inner reflection; a journey may provide ample opportunity for exchange of opinion with a variety of characters, each with their particular code of thought and being, as it does in *Rasselas*, *Gulliver's Travels*, and Bellow's *The Adventures of Augie March* and *Henderson the Rain King*. But the dialogue with the other may also be internalized: recollections may provide dialogue between the present self and the different others of the past self as well as other characters from each time plane, or the dialogue may be between the value system of the self and the cultural other, as in *The Handmaid's Tale*. In *Sammler's Planet*, *Humboldt's Gift*, and *The Dean's December* Bellow has the characters read themselves, their past, their culture through written documents, in the last Cord reads himself and his culture through the eyes of his dead Romanian mother-in-law, through her markings of his article about Chicago. In *A Theft* and in *More Die of Heartbreak* Bellow establishes a dialogue between perspectives by having a narrator reflect upon the course of the central character's life. The confession and the psychoanalyst's couch have served Davies as means of assessment of self and other. These are only a few of the means open to a novelist of ideas to practice his polemics. Analysis, debate, reconsiderations, these are essential features of novels of ideas. Thought and speech, if rendered in a credible manner, are fluid and digressive; points of reference are therefore necessary as the means to establish a hierarchy of values, indicate authorial accents, and shape the narrative. Each different time level in Offred's narrative in *The Handmaid's Tale* provides a point of reference for the Gileadan time scheme and its value system, for instance. Atwood's gradual placement of the time scheme of the narrative in relation to our time has a powerful effect because the narrative, initially so futuristic and distant, eventually unfolds in direct continuation of our own times.

Development of character through a search for truth and/or a testing of truth is to be found in novels of ideas which predominantly employ defamiliarizing character constructs as well as characters granted a higher degree of verisimilitude. Examination of the implications of a specific ideology through character was developed in the First Stylistic Line of the novel, according to Bakhtin. Testing, as an organizational principle, goes all the way back to "the Helleno-Roman world and the Orient" and makes "the Baroque novel … a culmination of the Sophistic novel, which was also a 'novel of trial' (testing the fidelity and chastity of separate lovers)" (392, 388). Bakhtin explains that "in the Baroque novel it is the trial of the protagonist's heroism and fidelity, his all-round irreproachability, that serves to unify the novel's grand and exceedingly diverse material …" (388). He continues: "The heroizing idealization found in Baroque novels is … of the kind familiar to chivalric romance: abstract, polemical and similar by and large to *apologias*" (394). "Everything in" the Baroque novel, Bakhtin says, "is a touchstone, a means for testing all the sides and qualities of the hero, qualities required by the Baroque ideal of heroism" (388). But testing is central to the Second Stylistic Line as well, although presented there in an ironic manner, as has already been discussed. Bakhtin says:

> The idea of testing the hero, of testing the hero's discourse, may very well be the most fundamental organizing idea in the novel, one that radically distinguishes it from the epic. From the very beginning the epic hero has stood on the other side of the trial; in the epic world, an atmosphere of doubt surrounding the hero's heroism is unthinkable.
>
> The idea of trial permits a complex organization of diverse novelistic material around the hero. But the very content of the idea of trial may

> change fundamentally in different eras and among different social groups. (388)

In the modern novel, Bakhtin argues, the testing of the hero is commonly combined with the hero's process of becoming (392). Testing is to be found in the Sophistic novel in a "crudely formalistic and external" form that lacks "a psychological or ethical dimension"; "in early Christian legend, saints' lives and confessional autobiographies" it is "usually united with the idea of crisis and rebirth" -- "martyrdom" or "temptation"; and "[a] special variant ... widespread in the ninteenth-century [sic] novel, was the testing of a hero's faithfulness to his calling, a testing of his genius and his 'chosenness'" (388-89). "Testing begins with an already formed person and subjects him to a trial in the light of an ideal also already formed" (392). But "[i]n the eighteenth century ... a new idea" emerged in "the *Entwicklungsroman* and more particularly the *Bildungsroman*" which develop character along the lines of "a man's *gradual* formation" (392). The modern novel traces "the process of a man's becoming, a certain duality, a lack of wholeness characteristic of living human beings, a mixture within the man of good and evil, strength and weakness" (392). Bakhtin finds this duality absent in "chivalric romance and in particular the Baroque novel" which tend to "postulate directly the inborn and statically inert nobility of its heroes" (392).

Counterpoint or development of characters who are either diametrically opposed to each other or similar enough to make a meaningful comparison is particularly effective for organizing examinations of the ideological patterns of different modes of being and reacting to the world. Huxley presents and develops a variety of such contrapuntal characters in *Point Counter Point.* Rampion and Spandrell are direct opposites -- life affirming and life negating respectively. Rampion and Quarles are also opposites as characters but they share the vision of the desirability of human totality. Rampion is capable of actualizing this vision of the fullness of life. Quarles, on the other hand, perceives the desirability of totality of being intellectually; convinced that he is incapable of breaking away from his tendency to address life in an unemotional, analytical manner, Quarles rationalizes his withdrawal with genetic fatalism, hiding behind the argument that a fuller life is denied him by his inherited temperament.

Ironic but highly significant role reversals between constrastive character pairs frequently occur in novels of ideas. In the *Handmaid's Tale* Margaret Atwood stresses the basic temperamental difference between Moira and Offred. Moira is flamboyant and outgoing, a rebel ready to defy authority and take action for herself and others; Offred is cautious, anxious not to rock the boat, not to provoke, alert to and mindful of the politics of human interaction -- the hierarchy of power and control, the codes of restrictions and bartering of privileges. Atwood lends Moira the attributes of the conventional hero/heroine, Offred almost those of the conventional coward. Atwood establishes this opposition through depiction of character through speech and action but access to consciousness is also of primary importance for maintaining a difference. The ideal requires distance. Moira remains the ideal, the embodiment of courage and human resistance to tyranny as long as the outcome of her flight remains unknown. Yet it is cautious Offred who ends up shaking the very foundations of Gilead.

From the distance of the time scheme in the framing narrative at the end of the novel, Offred's actions of self-preservation eventually have historical importance. Moira's code of being is defiant action. This is obvious during her and Offred's student days, during their training time with Aunt Lydia and Moira's escape. But when Offred meets her among the Jezebels not only her hands but her spirit has been broken. Offred's code of being is knowledge. By observing others yet remaining impenetrable or invisible herself, as Aunt Lydia suggests all Handmaids must, Offred gains privileges and power beyond her position. The code of mental activity -- persistent search for understanding, knowledge -- in a situation where knowledge, understanding, information, debate are jealously guarded and suppressed eventually turns out more powerful than the code of action and it redefines the concept of heroism strictly modified by the primary value of survival.

The inversion of conventional roles is a part of a more comprehensive development by inversion in *The Handmaid's Tale*. This method, common in novels of ideas, works in a manner similar to a Socratic argument where a rhetorical premise is led to its logical conclusion which exposes its inherent flaws, its untenability. Offred, raised by a radically feminist mother, notes that the state of Gilead, although based on the apparently altogether dissimilar principles of Christian fundamentalism, actualizes the feminist ideal of a female community in a rather ironic manner. Because of sterility caused by pollution, fertile women are the most valuable 'resource.' Although in name a Christian society and in actuality a patriarchal society, Gilead is ironically above all an Earth Mother cult. The Commanders' households are almost entirely female communities, the men being mostly absent, busy maintaining the social structure that has been established. The fundamentalist emphasis on banning prostitution, on banning abortion, when taken to the test in a world where the likelihood of giving birth to healthy babies has been minimized, runs into its opposite: the Handmaids and the Jezebels alike are prostituted by the state; deformed babies are classified as non-babies and disposed of by public agreement.

Atwood outlines the dichotomy between extreme feminism and extreme fundamentalism and then subtly dismantles it by demonstrating that their sexual politics in many ways work like mirror images of each other. The main issue, Atwood indicates, is not special privileges for either men or women but **human** equality and rights. She accentuates in particular freedom of expression -- a human right of obvious importance to the code of knowledge and understanding.

A central symbol frequently occurs as a unifying structural device and as the means to indicate authorial accent in the narrative. Characters' actions or events that affect their lives can take on a symbolic significance. As Bakhtin points out, symbolism is dialogic in the novel. Spandrell's murder of Webley in *Point Counter Point* is a symbolic action; Spandrell expects the murder to demonstrate to Illidge and the whole world his own inherent, superhuman superiority. But in relation to what is signified in the deep structure, this symbolic action has the opposite meaning. From the dialogizing perspective of the author, Spandrell's action drives home Rampion's caution that, in aiming for the superhuman, a person becomes less than human. Another example from this novel is the death of young Philip Quarles. On the level of the surface structure, his illness brings out the parental instincts that Elinor and Philip did not demonstrate in abundance earlier in the novel and his death is a tragedy to them and their family. But when his death is viewed in context of his father's tendency to let the brain rule his whole existence, the meningitis and the horror of the boy's loss of hearing and sight, his pain and wasting away take on a symbolic significance. Within the context of the whole novel, the young boy's death from a fever of the brain is symbolic for the tendency of most of the characters to let their head or neatly worked out ideologies rule their existence, which ties in with Huxley's evocation of the motif of Faust as it relates to the different characters who forfeit their soul and their humanity for different kinds of knowledge and power.

A highly interesting dialogue often occurs in a novel of ideas when the author selects a significant symbol or motif to establish and direct a dialogue between the vision of the author and that of preceding ages or authors. Such a dialogue may be seen in *The Handmaid's Tale* where Atwood identifies the basic motif for her construction of the role of the Handmaid in an epigraph from the Bible to indicate the perversion of religion when all kinds of anti-human practices are rationalized by references to the Bible. She also identifies her own rhetorical tactics in an epigraph from Swift's "A Modest Proposal" which also feeds into the narrative and merges with the role of the Handmaids as breeders of babies for the rulers of the society they live in. But the most interesting dialogue occurs in the central symbol in the novel: the eye. George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* resounds in *The Handmaid's Tale*, written in 1984. Like Atwood's evocation of Swift, her dialogue with Orwell's novel is a generic identification and a means to provide a point of reference for comparison and contrast. Atwood's and Orwell's respective novels share the concern with totalitarianism and the function that control of language and information has in the oppression of a people and echoes from Orwell thread variously through *The Handmaid's Tale*. The eye is a recurring image in Atwood's writing, loaded with meaning, in particular associations with power, control, possession, objectification, penetration, and as the emblem for the Gileadan state it connects with Big Brother's ever watchful eye in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. But it also captures the essence of Offred's activity throughout the novel: she keeps her eyes open, penetrates and records the official as well as the unspoken codes at work around her. Although inhumanly suppressed, Offred's penetrating eye gives her certain power and eventually leaves a record for the coming ages of the actuality of living in a totalitarian state -- a record altogether different from historical accounts.

Camus' use of cultural motifs in *The Fall* and *The Plague* is a point in case of the difference between philosophical tracts and novels of ideas and his management of form is rhetorical. Insistence on the absolute value of human life and the value of perseverance -- the ineffectual yet inherently valuable activity of Sisyphus -- are central to Camus' philosophical writings as well as his novels. But both in *The Plague* and in *The Fall* there is a dialogue between the symbolic significance of Sisyphus and the cultural motifs of Christianity, in *The Fall* more openly than in *The Plague*, because of its title. Clamence in *The Fall* is an inversion of Sisyphus and an inversion of Dr. Rieux in *The Plague* whose first priority is charity or to heal and preserve life, even when endangering his own, without wanting to see himself in any way as being heroic. Clamence is as self-obsessed, self-satisfied, as Dr. Rieux is selfless and Clamence, although no longer serving as a judge, judges everyone as equally guilty. Clamence is not only man fallen from grace but has Satanic overtones by making the ultimate sin of despair and acceptance of a nameless universal guilt and alienation from humanity appear virtuous. Camus' dialogue with his cultural heritage in his novels brings out a deeper resonance in meaning than his philosophical writings. Camus saw *The Plague* as an uncompromisingly anti-Christian novel and Christian thought figures strongly in the background of the novel. The actual outcome seems to me to be a recovery of essentially Christian values, charity and hope, even if on terms where faith is cancelled out. In *The Plague* organization itself has a rhetorical significance: Camus depicts the value of selflessness by concealing the narrator's identity until in the very conclusion. In *The Fall*, on the other hand, Camus' authorial accentuation of "low," "fall" in combination with Clamence's overemphasis on self has the effect that the of calling specific attention to the self-conceit that emerges in his confession so that he falls in the reader's estimation.

Doris Lessing calls attention to her own use of similar formal patterning as a particularly significant metaphoric or symbolic way of getting across her central point in her "Preface" to *The Golden Notebook*. Lessing expected her readers to recognize *The Golden Notebook* as a novel of ideas by its form: her "major aim was to shape a book which would make its own comment, a wordless statement: to talk through the way it was shaped"; "... if the book were shaped in the right way it would make its own comment about the conventional novel: the debate about the novel has been going on since the novel was born, and is not, as one would imagine from reading contemporary academics, something recent" (14). Lessing uses Huxley's method, borrowed from Gide's *The Counterfeiters*, of depicting a novelist working on a novel. Lessing apparently expected her own borrowing of this method to indicate that *The Golden Notebook* should be read as a novel of ideas. She presents ideas which are viewed from different angles and "compartmented" in the various notebooks where she uses different narrative methods, "[y]et the essence of the book, the organisation of it, everything in it, says implicitly and explicitly, that we must not divide things off, must not compartmentalise" (7, 10). Lessing further layers the multiple points of view by surrounding the notebooks with a framing device, "called *Free Women*, which is a conventional short novel, about 60,000 words long, and which could stand by itself" (7). But "the inner section called the Golden Notebook might be presumed to be a central point, ... to make a statement"; in "the inner Golden Notebook, things have come together, the divisions have broken down ...." (10, 7).

As Meckier notes in his analysis of Huxley surveyed in my first chapter, there is a perceivable similarity between the different characters' ideological approach and different literary trends in *Point Counter Point*. Huxley's emphasis on the character's tendency to divide into factions rather than strive toward a more wholistic approach to human existence therefore seems to apply specifically to literature. Huxley, through his evocation of different literary trends, seems to be working along similar lines as Lessing in her depiction of different novelistic trends; both of them calling attention to a tendency to literary modes into exclusive compartments instead of taking a broader view by drawing upon the different categories. *Point Counter Point* also seems to be a dialogue between the thesis novel and the novel of ideas. *Women in Love* seems in many ways a point of reference for *Point Counter Point* which reworks Lawrence's central thesis contrapuntally and selects character attributes for Rampion that correspond at once to Lawrence and Birkin. Huxley also repeats motifs from Lawrence's novel, such as the destructive combination of the will to power and aestheticism that Lawrence develops through Gudrun and the German Loerce which Huxley exaggerates through Spandrell. But Huxley also suggests in his development of Spandrell that behind the aspirations towards the aesthetic realm of the superman there is a desperate but misguided search for higher values -- for spiritual transcendence -- in extreme contrast to Burlap's value-code of materialism and hedonism. The central contrast in *Point Counter Point* is between the Faustian variations and the Lawrentian value of totality. This contrapuntal center lends structural unity to the novel, which opens up a dialogue between trends in literary thought and the value of totality. Although working from basically the same set of values, Huxley's contrapuntal development differs from Lawrence's in bringing to light greater density and complexity in the motivation for the characters' actions as well as in modifying the possibility that everyone can reach the goal of a fuller existence by the same means.

John Barth's *The End of the Road* also seems a novelistic comment upon trends in the novel. His main male characters seem to have a special bearing upon two main trends in the aesthetics of the modern novel: the realist novel and the novel of consciousness (as seen from the angle of social realism). Joe Morgan is goal oriented, a man of choice and action; Jack Horner is locked within his consciousness and immobilized by his inability make choices until he gets 'programmed' by existentialist solutions of role playing. Rennie, Joe's wife, suffers the effects of the extremes towards which the two male characters tend. Like the modern muse, 'wed' to realism but sidetracked to an 'affair' with the novel of consciousness, Rennie has a fling with Jack who shows her that despite Joe's claim that he is at all times consistent, there is another side to him when he thinks himself alone and unobserved which shakes Rennie's confidence in him. Rennie gets an abortion to get rid of a baby that could be fathered by either Jack or Joe and bleeds to death. Joe enters a mental asylum and keeps getting phonecalls from Joe to remind him of Rennie's death. *The End of the Road* is so closely analogous to the contemporary situation of the novel that, as far as I can see, it invites an allegorical reading. It seems to me both an independent and complete narrative in itself and a critical look at the struggles between the realist and the modernist novel; the assumption that there could be no fruitful union between the two resulting in pronouncements that the genre was dead.[1]

Like thesis novels, novels of ideas must cohere on two planes simultaneously: both these types of novel must be autotelic in the sense that they can be read and enjoyed like any other narrative without taking into consideration their historical context, yet they enter a dialogue with their contemporary reality and record topical issues within a broader historical context and knowledge of their historical context gives a fuller reading. Both these subgenres of the novel are rhetorical and their persuasive machinery functions although their topicality is lost, because both of them work their polemics, their dialogizing background, into the narrative fabric. But their organizational strategies differ somewhat. Frustration with the failure of novels of ideas to meet the expectations that a thesis novel fulfills is so prevalent in criticism that it is a point worth noting before bringing this general analysis of novels of ideas to a conclusion. A comparison of *Women in Love* and *Point Counter Point* brings home the difference. In both novels the initial introduction and development of characters bring out a sense of their depth and human potential. In both novels the novelist uses the strategy of narrowing the scope of certain characters; in *Women in Love* the narrowing and gradual distortion of Gudrun's value system, as opposed to her sister Ursula and Birkin, is particularly noticeable but in *Point Counter Point* the narrowing and distortion of all the main characters' sense of values except for the Rampions is noticeable. Thus both novelists accentuate a preferable option. Lawrence's placement of Birkin and Ursula's solution to the existential dilemma at the end of the narrative indicates that this is a viable option that can serve as a model to others. Huxley's ending, on the other hand, raises certain questions. The Rampions are most definitely the fullest, the most human and humane code of existence and thought depicted in the novel and Philip Quarles' appreciation of their sense of values is whole-hearted. But the possibility raised by the Quarleses that implementing the value system you know will serve you best may not be all that easy -- that temperament may limit the individual's options for growth -- detracts from the conviction that the Rampion solution, identical to that of Birkin and Ursula is universally applicable. Both texts center on the same issues: life in its earthy fullness as opposed to pursuit of values -- intellectual, aesthetic, political, monetary -- in neglect of tempering humanity. Huxley concludes his narrative with Burlap joyfully adding up the value of his writings on ethics in pounds and dollars, congratulating himself on having fired his secretary Miss Cobbett, who had warned Beatrice that he was a manipulative philanderer, without having to take the blame. One narrative anticipation of a few days reveals that Miss Cobbett commits suicide after writing him a letter. Another narrative anitcipation of a few hours has him and Beatrice romping in a bathtub pretending to be precocious children. The narrative concludes: "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." *Women in Love* and *Point Counter Point* affirm the same system of values and share some of the same narrative strategies. But *Women in Love* works towards a logical conclusion, *Point Counter Point* concludes like *Gulliver's Travels* with a starkly negative option that stands in contrast to the values and conduct affirmed elsewhere in the narrative.

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[1] John C. Stubbs has an article on Barth in "John Barth as a Novelist of Ideas: The Themes of Value and Identity." *Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction.* 8.2 (1966): 101-116. He compares Barth to J. P. Donleavy, Joseph Heller, and John Hawks. What Barth shares with these authors is that he "… forces his hero to see the world without absolute value, to see it at its most comically absurd, and then Barth leads him to accept and affirm such a world. Essentially, Barth and his contemporaries have a hard romantic strain in their works. It is not that they honor man's dignity, for this they systematically strip from him; it is rather that they admire his persistent ability to pull together what relative value or what hope he can in a world without order" (101). Stubbs argues that Barth manipulates "his material with the 'ulterior motive' of setting clear a particular body of ideas" (101). He develops the themes of value and identity in the *Floating Opera, The End of the Road, The Sot-Weed Factor,* "and then turns back on himself to redefine them in "Ambrose His Mark" (108). Stubbs points out that Barth calls his first novel "a 'nihilistic comedy,' and the second a 'nihilistic tragedy'" (102). "The continuity of his development of his themes," he says, "reveals that Barth is a novelist concerned with the ties between individuals" (102). The "affirmation of the human condition" that Stubbs perceives in these novels is "muted" yet of value (115). Obviously Stubbs' reading is quite different from mine except in his classification of Barth's novels as being of ideas. Barth's classification of *The End of the Road* as a nihilistic tragedy seems to me a confirmation of my allegorical reading of it.

The rhetoric of novels of ideas works towards making the reader reconsider the hierarchy of cultural values outlined in the narrative and it resembles the rhetoric of thesis novels by either including or hinting at preferable options, but unlike thesis novels, novels of ideas do not conclude in the manner of a logical argument. When Huckleberry Finn strikes out for the territory, when Gulliver moves to the stables, when Yorick in *Catch-22* strikes out for Sweden, when the judge in *The Fall* steps out of society to sit in prolonged judgement of himself, when Hans Castorp joins the war with all the energy and ethusiasm he lacked on the Magic Mountain, when Burlap opts for the irresponsibility of a destructive child, these are clearly not viable options for universal emulation. These endings stress the urgency of a reconsideration of the hierarchy of values. Although the general direction the revaluation should take has in each instance been clearly indicated during the narrative, it is not narrowed down to specifics. Atwood's ending in both *The Edible Woman* and *The Handmaid's Tale*, as well as Johnson's in *Rasselas*, each in a way is a return to the *status quo* but not quite, though, because in each instance greater freedom and insight have been gained and negative options have been given due consideration during the narrative, their implications shown at work.

This general overview of the kinds of reading novels of ideas invite and require indicates why strict either/ or approaches fail to accommodate their narrative principles and strategies; the genre itself defies and dismantles such divisions in a variety of ways. Perhaps because ideas are subjective, as Coleridge says in *On the Constitution of the Church and State*, and because they are more likely to possess us than we are to possess them, they have to be approached from a variety of angles within the context of different characters, situations, and cultural paradigms so that their outlines may emerge against their shadows. A novel of ideas is an author's dialogue with his culture with the intention to expose and interrupt false cultural values and false divisions, in society and in literature, in particular in the novel. The author may draw upon a variety of linguistic as well as narrative elements and organize them so that they serve the rhetorical purpose of persuading the reader that the contemporary hierarchy of values analyzed in the surface structure needs to be reconsidered. This survey indicates general tendencies in novels of ideas; my analysis of *Herzog* will give better insight into the way these elements come together in a single work where formal strategies function rhetorically.

PART II: SAUL BELLOW'S *HERZOG*

Introduction

HERZOG: AN ENCYCLOPEDIC NOVEL OF IDEAS

Saul Bellow's *Herzog* is the best possible example that I can think of for a more extended analysis of the genre of novels of ideas. Not only is *Herzog* a novel of ideas but by employing the novelistic strategies peculiar to novels of ideas Bellow actually demonstrates in a particularly ambitious manner how the novelistic fabric can be stretched to accommodate the history of ideas and literary history, as well as criticism of contemporary history, ideas, literary aesthetics and criticism. Because Bellow uses the form of a novel of ideas to dismantle the schismatic assumptions that show novels of ideas at a disadvantage, it is absolutely essential that *Herzog* be examined as the kind of novel it is. I am not about to dismiss or devalue in any way the impressive and excellent critical body on *Herzog* already in existence but insight into the generic strategies that Bellow uses helps to explain some highly important critical problems that come up in discussions of the novel. Moreover, it is about time, almost twenty years after the novel's publication, that recognition of the particular type of formal control to which *Herzog* attests be added to the recognition of Bellow's astounding manner of combining in one novel creativity, cleverness, knowledge, humorous and serious humanistic literary concern, as well as criticism. My analysis of *Herzog* as a novel of ideas is a step towards closing one of the gaps in criticism on Bellow's works -- a step that I fully believe can lead to some fruitful and perhaps even surprising discoveries if pursued further, both in *Herzog* and in other novels by Bellow. It proved quite a challenge to apply to *Herzog* the analytical framework for the novel of ideas that I had sketched out on the basis of relevant criticism and theory, as well as initial analysis of the different novels of ideas, Bellow's novels there included; a challenge not because *Herzog* undermined my initial findings -- quite the contrary -- but its textual and informational density as well as Bellow's authorial foxiness made the analytical task formidable. Critical examinations of ideas in *Herzog* have in particular centered on the cultural ideas that Bellow explores through the surface structure, through character; the ideas about the novel that he addresses in the deep structure, through his narrative development of formal components, remain largely unexamined.[1]

Debunkers of Bellow's formal control of his narrative in general and in *Herzog* in particular have been voluble and uncompromizing in their critical pronouncements backed up by seemingly solid textual evidence. Partly perhaps because of their stridency, but also no doubt because Bellow himself has been by far less forthcoming in interviews and articles about his experimentation with the rhetoric of form in *Herzog* than about the ideas he examines, critics who take more notice of what he actually does than what he should do in order to conform with some theoretical dictate have gained less hearing except in studies on character and comedy. Likely the very density of the text, the wealth of interesting subject matter for examination in *Herzog* has also helped to detract from concern with the relationship between rhetoric and form in the novel, leaving one of the critical "gaps" in criticism on Bellow that Gloria L. Cronin and Liela Goldman note in their "Introduction" to *Saul Bellow in the 1980s: A Collection of Critical Essays*, published in 1989 (9).[2] Formal analysis of *Herzog* is an intimidating task because the novel not only challenges received contemporary ideas and defies narrow generic definitions in the manner typical for novels of ideas; it is also encyclopedic in scope.

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[1] Leslie Field, a guest editor of *Modern Fiction Studies* for a special issue on Bellow in 1979, notes in "Saul Bellow and the Critics -- After the Nobel Award" that critical interest in Bellow was sporadic until after *Henderson the Rain King* in 1959 when "a dozen or so essays and reviews were published each year until *Herzog* appeared in 1964. Seventy-five essays or reviews were printed in that year alone, mostly on *Herzog*. In 1965 Tony Tanner's book appeared.... Never again did Bellow items numerically top the seventy-five that appeared during the year of *Herzog*.... By the time of *Herzog* (1964), much of the significant criticism analyzed the complicated world of Saul Bellow in depth. Bellow's ideas and style received more attention" (9).

[2] Field notes the critical attention to Bellow's Jewish background, the persistent interest in Bellow's "new hero in a modern world," "the humanistic philosophies ... in the context of a modern or postmodern world," the exploration of a "single theme, image, source, or parallel in a novel," and eventually "broader perspectives in the best essays"; "A recent Bellow symposium pointed out two very current trends in Bellow criticism: explorations of Bellow the 'transcendentalist' and of the Bellow protagonist as 'survivor'" (8-9). The last is a reference to *Saul Bellow and His Work*, published in 1978. Cronin and Goldman, in their "Introduction," affirm Field's identification of the dominant trends in studies on Bellow and note that "new books on Bellow" in the eighties "opened many new avenues of approach" which modified or challenged "the 'orthodox' vision of Bellow as humanist and contemporary 'yea-sayer,' or "neo-transcendentalist" (1). The studies they mention included examinations of Bellow's female characters, his narrative strategies, his concern with history, the indebtedness of his thought to Judaism, the textual development of his works in manuscript, and the view of Bellow as a nihilist; the essays in the collection expand upon some of these issues from a variety of angles, including as well Bellow's resistance of modernism, Freud, his evocation of English romanticism and the pastoral.

In *Saul Bellow* Malcolm Bradbury commends Bellow for possessing the kind of "historical alertness" which consists of creativeness that "outruns criticism and transgresses theory," meanwhile being aware of "its meanings" (19). The evidence that Bradbury finds for Bellow's historical alertness is that "in the 1950s and early 1960s" his "fiction seemed to represent an essential path onward, formally and morally, from modernism"; in the "later 1960s and 1970s" he responded to the rejection of Rousseauesque ideas of the Unique Self" and went on to question this 'unearned bitterness', this instinctive acceptance of waste land beliefs"; and in the late 1970s and early 1980s addressed "the Hegelian understanding that tells us that the spirit of our time must be in us by nature," as he did in earlier works, "though characteristically" the later novels "search out new modes of writing about it, new speculations about how it might be apprehended (19, 68, 84). Placing Bellow in *The Modern American Novel*, Bradbury observes that soon after the publication of his first short story in 1941 he "soon began to display ... a sceptical view both of realism and humanism that would prove characteristic of a number of his contemporaries" (134). The concerns that Bradbury refers to in Bellow's writing come together in *Herzog* as a concentrated attack upon ideas that devalue human existence and human nature, their effect upon the individual in his personal life and society, and their relation to ideas behind modern theory and practice in the novel. *Herzog* affirms Bellow's assertions in interviews and articles that he has faith in human resilience -- man's instinct for survival in a seemingly mad world -- and the power of man's intellect and creative thought to keep him alert to his possibilities and to reject spurious theoretical restrictions.

Herzog is thus an implicit debate upon the nature, status, and role of the modern novel as well as an explicit debate upon ideas. Frye's description of *Ulysses* in *Anatomy of Criticism* fits *Herzog* excellently in its "tendency to be exhaustive both in technique and in subject matter, and to see both in highly intellectualized terms" (313). Although both novels are intellectually conceived, the polemic tendency in ample evidence in *Herzog* is considerably less to the fore in *Ulysses*. In "Literature in the Age of Technology" Bellow describes *Ulysses* as "an aesthetic project for encompassing the whole world" -- "the novel's fullest account of human life -- within th[e] realistic convention," showing "us the beauty and power of what we call the commonplace" instead of the "banal average" that disgusted Flaubert (8, 13, 12, 13). Finding *Ulysses* "a book that made other books unnecessary" by its meticulous documentation of the totality of data, Bellow complains that its "comedy of information" eventually fails to reveal "what, after all, is the important information": "No one knows. Anything at all may be important" (8). The lack of prioritization, of accentuation, of resistance that Bellow finds peculiar to *Ulysses* is due to "the absence of a story," the absence of a "purpose," so that the novel provides comedy but not "moral and intellectual clarity" (15). Of course, if read in its literary historical context and taken as a whole *Ulysses* is an explosive if implicit resistance to contemporary concepts of the novel and commonplace existence. Both anatomies of contemporary ideas and forms, both in resistance to dominant contemporary trends in the novel, *Ulysses* and *Herzog* differ significantly in that the kind of resistance found in *Ulysses* does not make it a novel of ideas, whereas that found in *Herzog* does due to Bellow's pains to establish "moral and intellectual clarity" by providing points of reference to restructure the hierarchy of values in rejection of schismatic distinctions and fallacious ideas.

Herzog is as much a response to the crisis of the novel as it is a response to the crisis of the self in society; indeed the two are interrelated. The novel in particular was singled out from other genres and announced dead as a result of the death of self, author, character, story, meaning. Bellow asserts that the exhaustion of tradition and values is nonsense. He says in "Literature and Culture: An Interview with Saul Bellow":

> [ ] I don't think there have been any true breakthroughs, I think there have been lots of people who have told the world that they were doing original things and deliberately breaking through, but I haven't seen anything very

> original in quite a long time. Of course, originality is welcome in any form, but as a part of a cultural craze it becomes an obligatory thing: all writers and painters are to do something new, to belong to the modernist revolution. After all, there are not so many ideas that humankind has; whether it knows it or not, it continues to repeat the same themes. … Romanticism would have us believe that something startling, daring and new can be found as soon as you purge the film from the inner eye, or as soon as you break away from received ideas. This has been the standard of art for the last century and a half or so. (9)[3]

Judging by *Herzog* and Bellow's commentary in interviews and articles, it seems Bellow felt in the sixties that the ideas of exhaustion met with too little resistance and that critics were busier dictating how literature should be written than examining it in the context of what had already been written. Bellow says in "Skepticism and the Depth of Life": "Artists are beset by detractors, challenged by change, threatened with obsolescence by the prophets of electronics and by snooty college professors who want to pick up the marbles of tradition and break up the game" (16). He says in "Saul Bellow," a Paris Review interview conducted by Rosalie Seidler and published in the *Writers at Work* series: "in part Herzog is intended to bring to an end, under blinding light, a certain course of development" (193). In "Saul Bellow: an Interview," conducted by John Enck, Bellow says: "It should be the function of criticism to free the imagination of writers from the burden of historical evaluation. If the critic met his obligation the imagination of the novelist might be liberated. Is this what we see when we look at critical journals?" (159). Indeed due to the domination of formalist criticism strongly coloured by New Criticism in the fifties and the early sixties, with its essentially ageneric definition of the novel, its progressive view of literature, and its emphasis on the cancellation of authorial and historical genesis, few attempts were made to examine and assess the validity of the belief that modernism had fully broken away from, and made redundant, tradition.[4] *Herzog* is in line with a tradition of long and honoured standing: the literary work that is also literary commentary and evaluation, which includes Pope's *Dunciad* and "Essay upon Criticism," Dryden's "MacFlecknoe," Swift's "The Battle of the Books," Fielding's *Shamela* and *Joseph Andrews*, Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, to name but a few.

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[3] The interview which appeared in *Salmagundi*, 50 (Summer 1975) is an edited transcript of a public interview conducted by Robert Boyers, Robert Orrill, Ralph Ciancio, and Edwin Moseley at Skidmore College, November 8, 1973.

Bellow demonstrates in *Herzog* that there is an alternative to mutually exclusive dedication to either novelty or tradition. He says in "Literature and Culture: An Interview with Saul Bellow":

> we simply do again what has already been done, marvellously. The fact is that most stories have been told, and told again, and again. Because, after all, human beings tend to make the same discoveries over and over again. The difference is not in the story but in the individual to whom the the story occurs, or in the actors in the story. The individuals are different, the story tends to be the same.... Though we may think there is something smashingly new about the way we think in the 20th century, it is really not so new as all that. The difference is in the individuals, *they* are new; since individuals can't really invent themselves, I don't see why so much anxiety should be generated about this. I think the important thing they should discover is what they are, who they are; that is the novelty, that is what is new. (9)

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[4] Generic studies such as M. H. Abrams' *The Mirror and the Lamp* and Wayne Booth's *The Rhetoric of Fiction* proved to be too easy to dismiss as not being relevant to modernism. Booth responded to this complaint in his revised edition by relating his analysis to more recent works. But even generic studies that did take into consideration modernist works, such as Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg's *The Nature of Narrative*, and Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism*, did not gain the same hearing as New Criticism. See also Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel*. The Chicaco School of criticism led by R. S. Crane and the individual generic scholars did, nonetheless, resist the formalist narrowness and consider literary continuity. But the desire for a break from tradition was dominant. Even when leading literary commentators like Alain Robbe-Grillet acknowledged continuity in the novel, it was only to stress the need for greater efforts to sever the ties with tradition.

Bellow's formulation fits *Herzog* up to a point. But he does more than just tell an old story from a new angle; he *demonstrates* his argument through formal components. Bellow shows through his encyclopaedic employment of narrative forms and his organization that the different forms of the modern novel share the same roots and that each has its own capacity to enhance readability, each its own capacity to yield insight into aspects of reality; the human spirit remains the same, only its manifestation changes with the times, modernity embracing a corrosive scepticism of the cultural and humanistic value of literature.

Bellow does not assume that the reader will bring to the novel an interest in the ideas he addresses but he makes certain from the outset that at least while reading the book the reader will share his concerns. The central ideas are an integral part of verisimilitude, narrative elements, development, and structure and they combine comedy and rhetoric. But Bellow's method of using the form, the narrative elements of *Herzog* rhetorically has been a stumbling block in criticism on the novel. Bellow's rhetorical use of form has been entirely misunderstood or ignored in favour of the more obvious rhetoric in the surface structure of *Herzog* but individual aspects of his form have been treated to excellent analyses. Bellow's feat in writing a novel of ideas that is an encyclopedia of ideas as well as in employing narrative devices and forms to make a rhetorical point and to make the novel readable is too significant to go unnoticed. In form and content *Herzog* is a declaration of independence which consists of recognizing the dependence of the present upon the past without allowing either to overcome individual effort and artistry. In resistance to theories that the self and the novel no longer exist -- that entirely new solutions must be discovered because all humanistic ideas and forms of the past have been exhausted -- Bellow shows how old forms may be revived to describe modern reality, how new forms may be revitalized through unexpected combinations with traditional ones, and how forms presented as new are likely to be firmly grounded in the narrative tradition. The least expected, the least common feature of *Herzog* is that the novel is a literary game -- an invitation to the reader to *ludere*, to play, in Bellow's Ludeyville meanwhile being persuaded that the old machinery that instructs and delights can run smoothly alongside the new in the contemporary playground of the mind. Insight into the formal quirks of novels of ideas provides the key to Bellow's narrative game and uncovers an incredibly intricately woven and tightly knit narrative web, a formal design that belies all claims that in *Herzog* Bellow lacks novelistic control.

In the following analysis of *Herzog*, I rely predominantly upon the text itself because, as it turned out, figuring out the narrative design of the novel was like solving a mystery and Bellow leaves all the clues to his narrative strategies inscribed upon it. Critical commentary on *Herzog* gave me some valuable hints as to what to look for. In interviews and in his various articles and addresses Bellow is as forthcoming about his development of ideas in *Herzog* and his attitude to the situation of the novel as he is closemouthed about his narrative design. My interpretation of Bellow's rhetorical intent in *Herzog* is considerably shaped by the dialectic between Bellow's expressed views on literature and what he does in the novel but Bellow's narrative management had to more or less speak for itself. Before embarking upon a more specific generic placement and analysis of *Herzog*, I find it useful to provide an overview in chapter four of some central issues in commentary on the formal components of the novel because the perceived generic implications highlight the critical problems that invariably seem to arise in examinations of the dialectic peculiar to novels of ideas. The commentary also helps to establish *Herzog* within the context of Bellow's other works which I do not include in my analysis. The conflicting readings of *Herzog* have a direct bearing upon what I see as central concerns in Bellow's formal management of the novel which I examine in the following chapters and I will conclude my survey by placing my own approach within the context of the criticism I review. In chapter five I examine Herzog as an encyclopedic character construct which serves Bellow to unfold an encyclopedia of contemporary ideas. My analysis in chapter six is in part in continuation of chapter five because it focuses on Bellow's development of Herzog on par with the other characters through the grotesque, regarding in particular his rhetorical development of characters through a combination of the grotesque and key terms in Western culture and thought. Chapter seven is an examination of Bellow's encyclopedic organization of his narrative by means that allow the form itself to carry the main weight of Bellow's argument for cultural continuity and revival. In conclusion I will briefly address the main concerns arising from my study of the novel of ideas and of *Herzog* as an exemplary manifestation of the genre.

Chapter 4

CRITICAL PROBLEMS

Critical reception of Bellow's examination in *Herzog* of trends in contemporary ideas was divided in attitude. Wayne Booth, in "Salvation Justified," a review that appeared in *The Chicago Maroon Literary Review* in October of 1964, the year when *Herzog* was published, was one of those who welcomed *Herzog* as a timely show of resistance to the cultivation of existential angst and nihilism. Booth asserts in his review "that our major task is to come to terms with the novel's ideas" and concludes it by rejoicing that "no world is wholly lost, no time is wholly decayed, when books like *Herzog* are being written and read" (1). Booth sums up the reaction of reviewers: "a splendid, engaging book, but. But what? But marred by an overload of ideas, or by a failure to argue the ideas through, or (this in V. S. Pritchett, who annoyed me most) by mere cleverness" (1). "If Bellow is merely clever, I'd like to know who is profound," says Booth and lists the various aspects of the novel that attest to "genuine cleverness … that any humorist might envy," adding: "But the real trouble seems to be that all of this is surrounded by, embedded in, an Encyclopedia of Modern Ideas" (1). Indeed, according to John J. Clayton in *Saul Bellow: In Defense of Man*, "Mailer criticizes the intellectuality, feeling that *Herzog* 'has the same relationship to ideas that a good cookbook has to good eating'" (188).[1] In "Culture-Making: the Recent Works of Saul Bellow" David Galloway pointedly states the familiar objection: "Ideas are, after all, not literature…" (58). Philip Rahv responds in "Saul Bellow's Progress" where he hails Bellow upon his publication of *Herzog* -- his most recent and best "performance," "even if … a bit loose on the structural side" -- as "the most intelligent novelist of his generation," "the finest stylist," and "the most consistently interesting in point of growth and development":

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[1] The source Clayton cites without explaining why he attributes it to Mailer is an "Anonymous article in *New York Post*, March 14, 1965, p. 47" (n. 4, 265). Clayton also has a lengthy note on Maxwell Geismar's as a particularly vitriolic attack on Bellow as "'a sellout,' … 'commercial and corrupt,'" and "'Bellow's craft'" as nihilistic, nasty, and spiritually obscene (n.5, 265-66).

> To be sure, intellect is not art; in some ways it might even be said to be corrosive in its effect on artistic production. But without intellect it becomes impossible for the artist, the verbal artist particularly, to transform into consciousness what is offered by experience and the manifold and at times infinitely varied and subtle emotions it gives rise to. After all, thinking too is an experience. Without thought the writer may be able to relate the particulars of experience well enough, though usually at inordinate length, but he is at a loss when it comes to extracting values from experience that will make it meaningful to the reader (and perhaps to himself also). (219-20)

Rahv also notes that Bellow "has put a great deal of himself into his protagonist Herzog, but always with a twist of irony and a minimum of self-display" (220). Undoubtedly Rahv's observation is in response to assumptions such as Maxwell Geismar's, who compares Herzog to "a wailing infant, who is, I suppose, the author himself."[2]

If the objections to Bellow's cleverness and concern with ideas in *Herzog*, as well as the assumption that Bellow's protagonist is simply an extension of the author, seem like an echo of some of the commentary on novels of ideas reviewed in chapter one, so does discontent with the formal effects upon the narrative; its stylization of character, solipsism, looseness, inconclusiveness are seen as indications of Bellow's lack of critical and formal alertness as well as detractions from the realistic solidity of the novel. John W. Aldridge's collection of critical essays *Time to Murder and Create; The Contemporary Novel in Crisis* attests to the dramatic effect that characterization in *Herzog* had on his estimate of Bellow. In "Nothing Left to Do but Think -- Saul Bellow," written in 1964, Aldridge refers to

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[2] Geismar, Maxwell. "The Great *Herzog* Schande," *The Minority of One*, VI (Dec. 1964) 30. Quoted in Clayton, *Saul Bellow In Defense of Man*, 188; n5 265.

Bellow and Mary McCarthy as the "only two American writers at the present" who "write an intellectual fiction that speaks with some urgency and intimacy to intellectuals, either because it concerns the intellectual life and intellectual characters or because it takes possession of ideas in a fresh and imaginative way" (90). And Bellow's characters "symbolize," according to Aldridge, "the intellectual's feelings of estrangement and psychic dislocation in the contemporary world"; "the anxious, sceptical, guilt-ridden, and analytical, the insulted, injured, condemning and self-condemned, the victims, dangling men, and seekers after personal salvation" (91). In "The Complacency of *Herzog*," written in 1965, Aldridge's main disappointment is that Bellow fails to depict Herzog in this pathetic manner strongly remindful of Adam before he decides to admit and accept the responsibility for his lapse in betaking of the fruit of knowledge in *Paradise Lost.* Aldridge finds in Herzog the *suffering* that befits an intellectual; "it is ultimately his suffering that causes Herzog to seem worthy of major literary treatment" but "intellectuality, as [Bellow] portrays it in *Herzog*, finally emerges as far more of a blessing than a blight" (134). After all, "intellectuality gives us our high cultural expertise," Aldridge tells us, "but it has also severely impeded us in the efficient pursuit of the practical and the amorous life" (134). Affronted that Bellow "has managed to make a virtue of what we have always supposed was our chief source of discomfort," Aldridge's disenchantment with him is equalled only by his disillusion with McCarthy's *The Group* (134). He argues that Bellow in *Herzog*, like McCarthy in *The Group*, shows the intellectual at ease with, if not enjoying, his state of castration: "... Herzog is finally as arrogantly complacent in his new-found affirmative position, about being stuck with his loving and erudite self, as any of Mary McCarthy's heroines" (137).

According to Aldridge, Bellow's amelioration of the intellectual's most miserable lot in life is "not only" accomplished "through his flattering treatment of Herzog's miseries but through his highly unflattering treatment of the people with whom Herzog is associated and who are hell bent on causing him misery" (134-5). He says:

> Bellow has always had the habit, which in his later work has tended to become a rather facile trick, of treating his secondary characters as if they were inmates of either a zoo or a madhouse. Augie March and Herzog in particular are depicted as quiet, deferential princes set down among trolls in bedlam.... Herzog is chronically badgered and exploited by Simkin, Gersbach, Shapiro, Himmelstein, Nachman, and the various other freaks and egomaniacs whom Herzog rather plaintively calls his "Reality instructors." Bellow's handling of these people constantly verges on caricature. In fact, there are moments when they seem to exist solely as verbal abstractions, creations of merely adjectival intensity. Yet their function is clearly not to suggest living people drawn from close observation of the real world. Rather, it is to provide a milieu of grotesque idiosyncrasy and self-preoccupation against which Herzog can be seen as saintly. (135)

Amazingly, Aldridge seems to feel in all earnest that Bellow has exposed a well kept secret about being an intellectual as opposed to any other occupational role:

> The intellectual is [ ] too pure for this world, or so he has always secretly considered himself. But he has been obliged to assume that his superiority was at best a negative virtue, one he had to settle for in place of the truly human virtues shared by those who are not intellectuals. Now, however, through the drama of Herzog, he is given abundant evidence that nonintellectuals are monsters, that if they are human, he is positively angelic, that, in fact, to be an intellectual among such people is perhaps to be the very best thing there is. For in Herzog human warmth and ideas, heart and high culture, are joined together to produce the most flattering image of the intellectual to be found in modern literature. (135-36)

Aldridge's odd notion of the intellectual as Adam made "pure," if impotent and guilt ridden, by partaking of the fruit of knowledge is somewhat out of the ordinary in commentary on *Herzog* but his argument that the protagonist is a fully realized character, ideal hero even, against the backdrop of stylized minor characters is a recurring issue. Bellow's female characters, other than his mother figures, are found particularly problematic. In "Saul Bellow's Ineffectual Angels" Andrew Waterman notes "the often-remarked slightness of [Bellow's] younger women characters" and observes that "'heroines seems the wrong term for a sex that 'eat green salad and drink human blood' (*H.*, p.48) ..." (218). According to Joseph F. McCadden in *The Flight From Women in the Fiction of Saul Bellow*, Herzog does find his match in purity of heart and selflessness in his parents, in particular his mother (148-50). But he finds that other female characters, "[e]ven the whores, ... appear as threatening figures" and that the "sensitive men" are controlled, abused, manipulated by "powerful women" (139). If Herzog's woman friend Ramona is his "'whore mother,'" as McCadden claims, his ex-wife Madeleine is the devil in female disguise making Aldridge's description of the male characters seem realistic or dull even in comparison (152). Madeleine is "an arrogant bitch," "hypocritical," a "conscienceless sadist," adept at "financial exploitation" and controlled by "perversity," "animalistic lust," in McCadden's view; "... Madeleine is not a complex character with ambivalent feelings for her husband or conflicting aspirations for the future but the essence of evil whose actions are motivated by her feminine need to hate, her joy in injuring him" (137, 144, 141, 139, 141, 145, 141). Earl Rovit, in *Saul Bellow*, finds "that Bellow's gallery of female characters," with the exception of Thea in *The Adventures of Augie March* and Madeleine in *Herzog*, "tends to be composed of almost identical stereotypes..." (131). Yet he feels Madeleine eventually fails as a character: "It is as though there were something vitally important left out of Herzog's description of his life with Madeleine -- a mosaic piece, as it were, without which the total portrait remains seriously incomplete -- compelling, perhaps, in its shocking grotesquerie, but finally unconvincing" (34).

The implication that the protagonist outweighs all else in *Herzog* may also be seen in criticism where Bellow's narrative method is identified as monologue and thus in line with a trend that has been identified as dominant in modern narrative.[3] Known to be critical of modernism for tending towards solipsism -- monologue -- rather than a more combatant interaction -- dialogue -- with contemporary culture and ethos, Bellow has come under considerable critical attack for failing in *Herzog* to practice what he preaches. Tony Tanner, in *Saul Bellow,* the first book length study on Bellow published in 1965, a year later than *Herzog*, points out a paradoxical flaw that he sees in the novel, which is that although Bellow has stressed the shortcomings of monologue, and the importance of dialogue, he fails to actualize dialogue in *Herzog* (108). Tanner quotes a book review Bellow wrote on André Gide expressing the view that "[t]he truth of monologue is exciting," but above all indicative of the lot of intellectuals which entails that their "most vital conversation is with themselves":

> Bellow knows that "dialogue, not monologue, is the foundation of civilized life": but he also knows that "the life of a civilized man is, increasingly, an internalized one." His own work is full of "excellent monologists who want to advance to dialogue," but it cannot honestly be said that the advance has been made." (108)[4]

Keith Opdahl's *The Novels of Saul Bellow* shows that Tanner was not alone in finding a discrepancy between Bellow's preferred narrative mode and his actualization of it in *Herzog* (163):

> Theodore Solotaroff says that "like Herzog himself, the story of his recovery lacks the true opposition of Otherness," and Irving Howe says that "in the end one feels that Herzog is too hermetic a work, the result of a

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[3] Wallace Martin in *Recent Theories of Narrative* and Jonathan Raban in *The Techniques of Modern Fiction* (London: Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd, 1968) (35) note the prevalence of monologue in novels published after 1920. Georg Lukács' attack on modernist use of monologue in *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism* is particularly harsh.

[4] Saul Bellow, "Gide as Writer and Autobiographer," *New Leader* 4 Jun. 1951.

> technique which encloses us rigidly in the troubles of a man during his phase of withdrawal from the world."[5] Stephen Spender too feels the novel is self-enclosed and even solipsistic. Although Herzog dedicates himself to the world, as Solotaroff and Howe recognize, his personalism raises the charge that there is not enough of the world to provide a check on his thoughts. (163)

In "Culture-Making: the Recent Works of Saul Bellow," Galloway says that like John Barth, Bellow "represents one major tendency of modern fiction -- the movement inward toward the landscape of the mind, the movement toward monologue" (58).

Structural looseness and inconclusiveness, as well as solipsism, are attributed to Bellow's use of monologue in *Herzog*. Tanner says: "Since Bellow equates -- quite fallaciously to my mind -- a concern for form with a contempt for ordinary life, he is left with very little to shape his work, for the passive character and the meandering speculating mind are the very reverse of organizing forces" (107). He complains that because Bellow's characters "don't do much his books lack the spine of a plot, ... a sequence of linked incidents"; *Herzog*, like the life of the protagonist, "is mismanaged and patternless" (107, 89). In "Saul Bellow's Ineffectual Angels" Waterman agrees that Bellow's novels are "weak in narrative structure, profligate with commentary" but he finds that the "peripheral illustrative roles" of characters other than the "magnificent monologists," the "appearance of structural impotence," and the "virtual-monologue form" are the appropriate embodiments for the "heroes' alienation" (218). Essentially in agreement with reviewers finding fault with Bellow's "failure to argue the ideas through" in *Herzog*, as Booth puts it above, Tanner compares Bellow's endings to that of *Rasselas:* "they are often vibrantly, emotionally 'right' -- but from another point of view they could also be called 'conclusions in which nothing is concluded'" (105). Although "right," the endings are eventually flawed according to Tanner because the main characters' "yearning" for "community" and their "conviction" of the importance of useful interaction with others is not "put into practice": "All have tasks and journeys unfinished, problems unsolved, resolutions untested" (104, 105). Waterman agrees with Tanner: "The very form of the novels reflects his heroes' inability to express their values in action" (238).

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[5] Theodore Solotaroff, *Commentary*, 38 (December, 1964), 66 and Howe, *New Republic*, 151 (September 19, 1964) 24.

If Aldridge's reading of *Herzog* is representative of critical disappointment with the novel's failure to provide a faithful mirror to misery, Tanners' is representative of the reaction that it fails to conform with social realism. These are two different criteria for realism that *Herzog* does not seem fulfill in the expected manner. Waterman, who combines the two, suggests that "'meliorism' … is perhaps the right term for realism so purged of cynicism" (237). Tanner, significantly, grounds his estimate of Bellow in George Lukács' definition of the opposition between modernism and social realism in *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*. Tanner quotes Lukács on modernism as being "'static and sensational,'" lost in its subjective depiction of "'abstract potentiality'" which disintegrates the outlines of personality, as opposed to social realism which Lukács describes as "'dynamic and developmental'" due to its interest in the "'dialectic between the individual's subjectivity and objective reality'" (106).[6] Tanner continues:

> Now much of this can be applied to *Herzog*, where the main character is in some ways more of a presence than a person and where there is really very little *dialectic* between Moses and external reality (though there are some plenty of bruising collisions and some embraces).… The remaining feeling is of a man somehow dislodged or left out of the continuum of the physical world -- an unwilling refugee from reality banished to lasting inwardness. (106-07)

Both Tanner and Waterman seem to have expected Bellow to resolve *Herzog* on the plane of the central ideas. Tanner finds that Bellow "cannot" in *Herzog* any more than in his earlier novels "produce an authentic image of the desiderated new way of life" (115). Waterman sees in *Herzog* such "corrosive scepticism towards ideas and even language" that it "threatens the novelist's very enterprise, points to the silence in which other twentieth-century writers have found a perfection of integrity" (233). In other words, *Herzog* does not present a desirable solution to the ideological conflict it develops in the manner of a straightforward thesis novel; it fails to hold out the promise that the problems in the protagonist's life can be permanently solved, "concluded," by affirming through "action" the right "conviction," the right ideas.

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[6] See Lukács, *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, 19-24.

The critical assumption that Bellow, due to his preference for a single central narrative angle, is a modernist writer who not only lacks critical historical awareness but is also devoid of formal awareness, compositional control, which even the harshest critics of modernism have had to admit as its hallmark, inevitably leads to the conclusion that he is above all content with maintaining the *status quo*. Opdahl, Waterman, and Tanner in his early work on Bellow agree that if Bellow fails to break away from modern solipsism, it is not for want of trying. But in his "Afterword" to *Saul Bellow and His Work*, conference proceedings published in 1978, Tanner presents Bellow as an uncritical handmaid to the cultural power structure. Tanner sums up and comments upon the papers in the proceedings either by resisting arguments which go categorically against his view of Bellow's work or by selecting from the individual papers details that buttress his own view. He resists in particular Malcolm Bradbury's paper "'The Nightmare in Which I'm Trying to Get a Good Night's Sleep': Saul Bellow and Changing History," devoting a good part of his "Afterword" to refute Bradbury's argument that Bellow shows active engagement with history (134-36). Quoting Lukács and Max Horkheimer in support of his argument, Tanner reiterates the main points in the conclusion of his early study on Bellow's works; that they evince the ahistorical subjectivity, the solipsism, the inconclusiveness (endings that he says are found "unsatisfactory … by almost universal agreement"), the lack of the organizing element of a purpose or "quest" as well as the "realization" of social interaction that Lukács identified as the modernist legacy from naturalism (133-36). Bellow is locked within the ivory tower of the "'bourgeoisie,'" of "liberal humanism," according to Tanner who reacts disdainfully to Bradbury's reference to Bellow as "metaphysical comedian" and feels that an attempt to "laugh our way out of history" is "the privilege enjoyed by a distinguished, Nobel-prize winning author"; Bellow's "sense of the 'human condition' has remained basically static" because his "protagonists 'suffer history' ('victims'), or they in some way evade it, or seem to ('survivors')" (134-36). Tanner makes much of Bellow's retreat into what Thomas Mann referred to as "'power-protected inwardness.' *Machtgeschützte Innerlichkeit*," or the failure to resist or criticize social authority; "such problems of history … do not functionally enter [Bellow's] fiction" (134, 135). Galloway, similarly, sees Bellow's lack of critical resistance manifested in *Herzog*, *Mr. Sammler's Planet*, and *Humboldt's Gift*, finding him similar to Barth in his willingness to cater to "a ghettoized university audience that wants its intellectual fancies tickled, delighting in wordsmanship, literary allusion, and philosophical one-upmanship" (58). Yet unlike Bellow, Galloway says, "Barth has elected to ask formal questions about the art of fiction that seem almost heretical when compared to Bellow's functional craftsmanship," (58). He continues: "one sign of Bellow's failure as a novelist is his disinterest in formal experimentation or, to put it another way, his apparent contentment with a narrative formula which dangerously constricts his vision" (59).

The narrative features attributable to monologue that Tanner and the other critics above find in *Herzog* as well as other works by Bellow can for the most be substantiated by textual evidence but because these features are only a part of the narrative fabric, because they exist in a dialectic relationship with elements commonly regarded as their diametric opposites, conclusions based upon these features alone cannot but be misleading. The main complaint in these readings seems to be that Bellow's work is 'monologic' in the Bakhtinian sense of the term; that by consistently failing to challenge or modify the single linguistic plane, the single value system in each novel, Bellow fails at realism because he fails to actualize convincingly a contestant "Otherness."

The general thrust in this presentation of Bellow as the literary 'pussycat,' aptly captured by Aldridge when he describes *Herzog* as "a fatty sigh of middle-class intellectual contentment," has been variously and significantly challenged (137). Ada Aharoni's "Women in Saul Bellow's Novels" acknowledges yet refutes the argument that Bellow presents through Herzog a single and uncontested view of particularly "slight" female characters that are found to contribute to the lopsided image of a saint in a zoo. By taking into account the psychological bias bound to occur because of the narrative angle, as well as Bellow's interest "in illuminating certain societal attitudes towards women rather than fully delineating their characters," Aharoni comes to the conclusion that Bellow portrays "a whole world peopled by not only men but also by women" who resist the classification of mere types: "... a vast and rich gallery of convincing and vivid women of all kinds. His female characters are active, alive, creative, and outspoken. They are shown, for the most part, as forging meaningful lives for themselves, struggling, working, searching, growing, and achieving" (95). Aharoni argues that despite the single viewpoint of Herzog a double view of other characters emerges in the narrative, for example a double view of Madeleine:

> … Herzog gives us a full, convincing, and vivid portrayal of Madeleine. Through his perception, we can not only clearly visualize Madeleine, but even see her side of the story too. Since it is Herzog, the hurt ex-husband who tells the story of his painful divorce with Madeleine, whom he still loves, his word must be taken with a grain of salt; and yet underneath the male point of view, we can also discern that of the female (104, 98).

Scenes and other characters' commentary contribute to the alternative image of Madeleine as a compelling character, says Aharoni, and in his descriptions of her, Herzog emphasizes her autocratic ways but also shows her getting restless with his own "domination and patronage" as well as his general reluctance to share her interests (98-104). Madeleine emerges as a 'new woman' who makes her own choices and who ultimately takes her destiny into her own hands" (105). Aharoni adds: "Her true-to-life portrayal, her authenticity, and her vividness make her one of the best feminine portraits of her kind in modern American literature" (104). Aharoni describes Ramona as a combination of "the modern woman" -- "independent, hard-working, intellectual, and sexual" -- and "the conventional" -- "warm, gentle, loving, an excellent cook with genuine family feeling" (105). "Ramona has already arrived at the goal of full personhood that Mady was aspiring to" says Aharoni (105). Aharoni refers to "Herzog's passion for Madeleine" as the "psychocenter" of *Herzog* and finds in her "a fascinating psychological study"; "certain critics" who stress "only the negative aspects of her character" "seem to overlook" that "they have probably been influenced by the hurt ex-husband's view" (102).

Other commentary reinforces the impression that readings of *Herzog* as an uncritical monologic work are not necessarily attributable to Bellow's construction of the text itself. In "Saul Bellow and the Dialectic of Being Contemporary" Gerhard Bach asserts that "Bellow, ever since *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953), has been:

> "writing against the grain" (Pifer) of literary fashion. While his contemporaries keep mapping the modernist and post-modernist culture, casting, as he sees it, "artificial pearls before real swine" ("A Matter of Soul" 29), Bellow claims for himself the narrative tradition of nineteenth-century (Eastern) Europe.[7] (3)

In "Saul Bellow and 'The Lost Cause of Character'" H. Porter Abbott adds significant modifications. Abbott finds *"Dangling Man* [Bellow's] most modern book"; "the static non-story of a mind in a room, a yearning for character in search of its type," where "the historical waning of character is directly linked … to the waning of confidence in reason" (117, 115). He continues: "… Bellow's subsequent return to character in fiction, to the limitations of type, was a way of making the case for the reality of the self: a self inseparable from its own freedom and inviolability" (126). But as Abbott notes, Bellow's adoption of nineteenth-century realism has a modern twist:

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[7] Ellen Pifer, *Saul Bellow Against the Grain. (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania Press, 1990);* Saul Bellow, "A Matter of the Soul: Address to the Fourth International Congress of the Institute of Verdi Studies," *Opera News* 11 Jan. 1974: 29.

> He did not proceed in the manner of the nineteenth-century novelist who accepts character with no question as to its reality. Character instead became the subject, that which is under observation (126). Herzog himself is reading Herzog. He reflects upon himself as he would upon a character. Thus, as confined as the book is to the interior Herzog, the mind we hear is continually engaged in trying to gain knowledge of itself by reading the acts it has a part in directing. (130)

Abbott rejects the argument that because narrated from the angle of a single consciousness, *Herzog* evinces the solipsism and dissolution of self that Lukács found symptomatic of modernist decadence and alienation. He says:

> *Herzog* has the appearance of a very "modern" book in its excessive subjectivity, its rambling, inconclusive interior argument.... His mental correspondence, which consists mainly of fragments of letters, seems, in its very plenitude, far more hopelessly disjunctive than Joseph's diary and has led at least one critic to see the book as yet another improvisation on the same journal form Bellow began with in *Dangling Man*.[8] (129)

But Abbott finds in *Herzog* the organizing principle that Tanner missed:

> the mere fact of a work's "interiority" is not in itself evidence for the dissolution of either character, the self or the novel. Georg Lukács found in it one of the principal defining features of the novel. What Lukács required was that this interiority be embedded in a sequence of actions in the external world. And for all its steamy subjectivity, this is the case in *Herzog*. The book has a plot -- a comic variant of the revenge plot. Furthermore, plot

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[8] See Earl Rovit, *Saul Bellow*, 24-25.

> and character mesh in precisely the symbiotic way James approved of in "The Art of Fiction." (129)

Abbott sees the central conflict with an "Other" in Herzog's "battle against the tyranny of ideas on two fronts, within and without" because the other characters "impose on reality" "reigning ideas" and "defin[e] him according to these ideas" (133). Most importantly, Abbott's analysis indicates that rather than limit himself exclusively to either social realism or humanistic affirmation, Bellow stakes out his own territory across these presumed lines of binary oppositions:

> In his focus on character, Bellow weds not simply the personal and the political but with them the metaphysical as well. Herzog's meditations on himself culminate in a luxury of religious bewilderment. He makes no assertions, claims no beliefs. But clearly the final appeal of the emotions which in themselves constitute the mystery of his being arises from their metaphysical potential. (130-131)

Sarah Blacher Cohen's *Saul Bellow's Enigmatic Laughter* challenges the view of Bellow as a "meliorist" and Herzog as a passive mirror to intellectual sanctity and conceit, but runs counter to Aharoni's sensitive understanding of the female characters. Cohen says:

> any study of Bellow's comedy which concludes that his leading principle is 'all is well in this most perfect of worlds' is not only to misconstrue the import of his work, but also to undermine the complexity of his vision. With no attempt to gloss over low facts, he unsparingly exposes what is enervating, corruptive, and brutalizing in modern life. Indeed the question that recurs through most of his novels is how man can discover who he is as well as maintain his dignity when he must contend with so many inimical and debilitating forces. (4).

Comedy is Bellow's means to deflect the temptation to despair in the face of adversity and establish a balance, Cohen argues; "to interrupt, resist, reinterpret, and transcend adversity" rather than pretend it does not exist (4). Comedy serves Herzog in his battle with his own feelings of lack of hope, control, meaning as well as "the apocalyptic pronouncements of the reigning cognoscenti" until he realizes "that man does not live by wisdom alone" (5).

Cohen notes that Bellow's "comedy of character" is the dominant "comic element in [his] novels" which with "the candor of untempered realism," "amply exposes man's damaged nature," inviting "sympathetic" laughter when the character recognizes the "damage and struggles ... to make his internal repairs" -- inviting "unsympathetic," but never cruel, laughter when he remains oblivious to his frailties (6). The elements Bellow exposes through comedy of character, says Cohen, are "affectation"; "excessive involvement with self"; "the breach between the [ ] characters' minds and their bodies" and "our tendency to deify ourselves" which Bellow deflates through images of the characters' "grotesque physical features" or "animal analogies"; "stubborn adherence to" "fixed ideas"; the mixed blessing of "dynamism" or "energy" spent in excess of necessity likely to ensure exhaustion but also survival (and the reader's interest); and the protagonists' "comic misconceptions and inconsistencies" (6, 7, 9, 10, 12).

Abbott suggests in "The 'Lost Cause' of Character" that the distinction between type and character may be less useful than "[t]he difference between free and fixed characters" which he says "is Bellow's major subject in the work of his maturity" (127). He refers to McCarthy's observation in *The Humanist in the Bathtub* that "'[a] comic character, contrary to accepted belief, is likely to be more complicated and enigmatic than a hero or a heroine, fuller of surprises and turnabouts'" as an apt description of free types or characters who evoke the kind of sympathetic laughter that Cohen describes, as opposed to laughter "tinged with contempt" in response to the fixed and "mechanical predictability," the "machine-like and therefore unhuman quality," that Henri Bergson ascribes to comic types (126-27).[9] Abbott describes Bellow's protagonists as "an assortment of clowns, schlemiels, 'fucky-nuckled' bumblers. The principal appeal of these types is that, through them, violation of normal human behaviour -- surprise -- is an easily achieved effect" and the reason for "[i]ts frequency of recurrence in the novel" is its effectiveness in "warfare against human predictability" (132).

But Bellow employs a variety of comic conventions other than that of character. Cohen points out that in situational comedy Bellow employs "sexual farce," "burlesque," and comic situations which evoke "agony and amusement" by revealing "the disintegration" of the self "in action";

> Bellow's forte, however, does not lie in producing ingeniously wrought comic situations. Since his muse is more adept at engendering thought than at generating action, he is especially skilful at creating comedy of ideas.... While Bellow's comedy of ideas does not accomplish the purported aim of conventional satire -- the reform of the corrupt or inane status quo through ridicule -- it does accentuate and clarify the nature of the corruption or inanity. (16)

Cohen points out that Bellow does not "sacrifice subtle character portrayal and thematic profundity" simply to deflate characters or public figures "and then inflate them into execrable monsters" (16). In Bellow's comedy Cohen detects the Jewish conventions of the "exhortative kind of satire and irony unique to the Prophets," the "often circuitous way of ascertaining what is ludicrous, [ ] akin to the tortuous wit found in the *Talmud* and *Midrash*," and "defiant topical satire" peculiar to Jewish resistance to oppression (16-17). She also notes the "American literary heritage" of "Melville's heady speculative comedy and Twain's sardonic indictments" of man (17). The conventions Bellow draws upon from "world literature" are akin to Dostoevsky's employment of *"eirons"* and *"alazons,"* she says, as well as "the lively 'encyclopedic comedy of knowledge' of Rabelais, Burton, Sterne, and Joyce" (17).[10] In *Saul Bellow; the Problem of Affirmation* Chirantan Kulshrestha notes much the same when he bases his identification of *Herzog* as "Menippean Satire" upon Frye's definition of the genre and Herzog as a *"philosophus gloriosus"* whose "satire is mainly directed against" himself, except when he responds to the "theorising" of "the Reality Instructors of the academic world":

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[9] Mary McCarthy, *The Humanist in the Bathtub* (New York: New American Library, 1964) 211-12.

> The method he employs to demolish their stance is Socratic in spirit. As a first step he exposes an intellectual formulation by creating an honest doubt about its validity through innocent, but ironic, questioning; then, as a second step, he carefully introduces his own standpoint after eliminating all other alternatives as logically or ethically untenable. The arguments contested by Herzog invariably centre round the state of the present-day civilisation and the place of man in it: his aim is almost always to reject theories that decry modern society and to affirm man's possibilities of transcendence by hinting at a system of values that, in his view, characterises -- or ought to characterise human life. (114, 120-21)

"Despite such echoes and affinities," says Cohen, "Bellow is a comedian of ideas who strikes out on his own" and she finds the capacity of comedy to unsettle accepted conventions and beliefs distinctive in Bellows' works. (17). She points out that Bellow's use of "energetic and feisty" "comedy of language" in his protagonists' "verbal response" to "despairing circumstances" sets his work apart from the lackluster response to despair depicted in modern "literature of exhaustion" (18). She also points out: "Unlike the literature of the absurd," where language is "reduced to mechanical phrases, nonsense syllables, incoherent grunts, and even silence in reaction to the banal and the baleful, Bellow's discourse is highly articulate and innovative"; even is he "never succeeds in verbally routing the banal and the baleful, he refuses to lose faith in the cognitive power of his language to expose them for what they are" (18). Finally, she notes that with his "comic style which entertains as well as elucidates" Bellow unsettles language, coins new "words and phrases," juxtaposes a wide range of linguistic levels, and employs "farfetched mock heroic allusions" which often turn out to be appropriate and meaningful despite their seeming incongruity (18).

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[10] See Robert Shulman, "The Style of Bellow's Comedy," 109.

Cohen sees Herzog as a subtly drawn character, alert to his own human quirkiness: "vanity"; "affectation"; unruly body; misguided humanistic presumptions; perverse "delight" in "anguish"; taste for "melodramatic" exaggeration and "hyperbolic," if well justified, "confessions of woe"; reluctance to face evil and death; propensity to trust the head and not the heart (144-56). She does not find Herzog a complacently haloed intellectual but a satirist who employs his wit to vent his grievances in acerbic Juvenalian attack and his nostalgia in "the milder Horatian kind of satire" (157). "Herzog has a ready talent for verbal humor," she says; "his "mongrelized expressions amuse us with their unusual combination of hackneyed strains and increase our understanding of the principal concerns of the novel through their unexpected emphases" (169). In Herzog, Cohen sees the type of the *"schlemiel"* -- "the confirmed bungler" who as likely as not has himself to blame for most of his misfortunes; only, this is something Herzog himself, unlike the conventional *"schlemiel,"* recognizes (146-48).

But if Cohen's understanding of Herzog as a character whose stylization is equal to his realistic depth departs notably from that of Aldridge and others who see him purely as a mirror image, her perception of the minor characters agrees with theirs and contradicts Aharoni's of the female characters. Cohen classifies Herzog's ex-friend, Herzog's ex-wife's lover Valentine Gersbach as a "caricature" who amplifies yet never recognizes "many of the same comic vices" as the ones Herzog perceives in himself and thus "evokes more unsympathetic laughter than Herzog since he does not have his redeeming virtue of self-mockery" (158-59). She finds female characters more prominent in *Herzog* than in most of Bellow's novels but predominantly as stylized figures in the tradition of satire upon women that George Meredith found peculiar to high comedy: "The Madeleine we see [ ] is not a fully realized personality, but the grotesquely funny creature that emerges from Herzog's angry recollections and perverse fantasies" and "[i]f Madeleine is the bizzarrely comic *belle dame sans merci*, then Ramona Donselle is the comically pathetic woman with too much *merci*" -- "the caricatured sensualist" (160, 161, 162). If Aharoni's analysis of Madeleine and Ramona demonstrates that Bellow provides the premises for a reading of them that goes beyond caricature, Abbott certainly makes a case for a more flexible reading of Gersbach. Abbott points to the climax of the revenge plot in *Herzog* when Herzog's vision of Gersbach bathing June becomes "the catalyst to Herzog's non-revenge":

> Gersbach, who up to now has been a caricature of the fixed, Bergsonian type, is for a moment converted into the kind of free character we have been discussing. Recognizing him as such, Herzog can no more impose his will on him than he can allow his various "reality-instructors" to tell him (Herzog) who he is. The physical act of dominating another by one's will (here, murder) is equated with the mental act of categorizing another according to one's ideology. As Herzog knows, the latter is a forerunner, a necessary preliminary, of the former. Conversely, the recognition of inner mystery is a possible stay against the violence of authoritarianism. (130)

This latter group of critics obviously works from the premise that Bellow successfully carries out his intentions as a novelist whereas the former group assumes that he fails to meet the expectations that his narratives raise. The latter readings do not altogether cancel out the validity of the former as far as identification of narrative elements goes; even Aharoni, whose reading of the female characters cuts most clearly across their identification as simple caricatures or grotesques, must account for the element of stylization or seeming gaps in their depiction. Similarly, the issue of whether or not *Herzog* is modernist or monologic must be dealt with; by taking into account elements that counteract Herzog's emotive simplifications as does Aharoni or by identifying *Herzog's* departures from modernist conventions in narrative organization as Abbott does, or from the passivity in narratives of exhaustion and the incoherence in narratives of absurdity as Cohen does. The rhetorical elements that Cohen and Kulshrestha call attention to obviously do not figure in the monologic readings of *Herzog*. But even if these alternative readings do not altogether explain away the elements that lead to the conclusion that *Herzog* is typical of Bellow's monologic tendency, they certainly explain how these elements coexist with others that undermine them and clearly point up the excessive superficiality of the critical conclusions above. Cohen's insistence that the balanced juxtaposition of the pathetic and the comic, understanding and criticism in Herzog's as well as Bellow's vision of the human condition has redeeming qualities clearly goes against Tanner's reaction that levity in 'serious' literature is self-indulgent and uncritical.

In "The Style of Bellow's Comedy" Robert Shulman, whom Cohen quotes, provides an impressive study, in view of its brevity, and the one most obviously relevant to mine, of the formal aspects of Bellow's employment of "the genre Northrop Frye calls 'the anatomy'" "in his three open form books -- *The Adventures of Augie March, Henderson the Rain King*, and *Herzog*" (109).[11] Shulman places Bellow with "Twain, Whitman, and the Chicago naturalists but also with the rhythms and turns of Yiddish speech and humor, with English picaresque novelists like Fielding and Smollett, and with European existentialists from Dostoevsky and Nietzsche to Sartre and Camus" (109). By adopting "this expansive style of ideological, comic prose fiction" "that encourages a writer to draw vigorously on many genres and the range of the world's literature" -- practiced by Rabelais, Burton, Sterne, Joyce, and Melville -- says Shulman, Bellow reveals "the intensity and degree of his intellectual and emotional commitments," as well as "his commitment to metaphor and learning, to the individual and the free, probing intelligence of an 'I'; to render fully his sense that process is more important than conclusion -- and that fixed conclusions may be desperately hard to find in an often baffling and inhospitable universe" (109). Shulman argues that this "originally European" form allows "American writers" to "overcome" the "liability" of "inevitably" having to "deal with common men," even if "gifted" at times, "and with the possibilities and impossibilities of a democratic society that, in affirming the value of the ordinary, also makes it difficult to write about the exceptional, the extraordinary and/ or the imperial" (110). Shulman suggests that an important device for solving this problem is "the array of allusions that is apparently inconsistent, but cumulatively the references argue for the dignity of the present and our continuity with the past"; "Both the present and the past, the commonplace and the exalted, are thus affirmed; and in the act of recording the universal darkness, Bellow's energy of style drains the insight of despair" (110).

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[11] See Frye's *Anatomy*, 303-314. Shulman also refers to Morris Croll, "The Baroque Style in Prose," *Studies in English Philology: A Miscellany in Honor of Frederick Klaeber*, ed. Kemp Mallone (Minneapolis, Minn., 1929) 427-456.

In his analysis of *Herzog*, Shulman notes that "Bellow has answered to the energies and openness of stylistic predecessors like Rabelais, Melville, and Joyce to help him once again do justice to his sense of modern existence…" (117). He sees Bellow's "independent version of the existentialist journal as novel … in the background of *Herzog";* more to the fore is "the self emerging with present and remembered action as the occasion for analysis and commentary" and Bellow's reanimation of "the epistolary novel" by making "the eighteenth-century novelistic convention the vehicle for a flexible, comic probing of an encyclopedic array of learned, personal, and social issues" as well as a means for "characterizing" his "protagonist" and "the twentieth century" in contrast to the eighteenth in "the obsessive modern concern with a failure of communication, a strain *Herzog* both embodies and resists" (114). Shulman says that due to the generic openness of the form,

> Bellow, through his reanimating of the eighteenth-century epistolary conventions and the strategies of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century satire, can embody his interest in the Enlightenment in the very texture of his work, as well as through the more obvious intellectual affinities … and the

> pervasive interest in the Enlightenment as the cornerstone of modern liberal, scientific, and, democratic thought and the antagonist for those who oppose these tendencies in modern civilization. (115)

Shulman compares Herzog to other Bellow characters "who are unpretentiously *schlemiels* and *schlimazls* and genuinely philosophical fools, protagonists related to Gimpel the fool as well as to Tristram Shandy" (115). "In a work as insistently twentieth century as *Herzog*," he says, "the vignettes of Gersbach, Madeleine, and Shapiro are unexpectedly, formalized satiric portraits which expose the pretensions, clichés, and fakery of the modern American literary intellectual in Bellow's version of *MacFlecknoe* and *The Dunciad*" ; "... Bellow, like Dryden and Pope before him, transforms personal animosity into satiric art" (114-15). Shulman concludes:

> What emerges in the course of *Herzog* -- the comedy, suffering, and encyclopedic speculation; the concern for personal fates, social facts, and cosmic issues; the interest in observed actuality and abstract symbol; the tension between a cruel, deterministic reality and the impulse toward creative freedom and joy; the precarious reliance on metaphoric probing and an open form -- all suggest that against great odds, both public and personal, Bellow has once again succeeded in reanimating a style of intellectual comedy that illuminates and celebrates the present even as it connects us and Bellow with some of the most powerful imaginations of the past. (117)

The disparity in the readings of *Herzog* is understandable in view of the fact that the novel is an encyclopedia of forms as well as ideas; *Herzog* can be read as different kinds of novels, depending upon the narrative strain picked out and pursued. Even if the various classifications of *Herzog* are at odds, they complement each other when Bellow's encyclopedic treatment is taken into account. The classification that consistently yields the least insight into Bellow's formal development is when *Herzog* is labelled a novel of ideas because the term is seen as pointing exclusively to examination of ideas. One striking difference between the various studies on *Herzog* in my review is in the extent to which the critic in question resists the defining features of the novel -- the load of ideas, the subjective narrative perspective, characterization, other aspects of form -- or accepts them as appropriately worked out. A more significant difference between these studies is the extent to which *Herzog* is seen a critical narrative. As is evident in my analysis in the following chapters, I side with the critics who appreciate *Herzog* for its formal departures from narrowly defined realism, arising from its critical engagement with a cultural situation, and I also side with the critics who find in *Herzog* a credible depiction of character and reality, despite the prevalence of stylization. My analysis of narrative elements and aspects of form coincides with all of these readings in some way. Aside from expanding upon Booth's classification of *Herzog* as an encyclopedia of ideas and Shulman's observation that it is also an encyclopedia of forms, I find Bellow's application of the encyclopedia characteristic of a novel of ideas because of the way he harnesses the rhetorical potential of the form itself to conduct a historical survey and assessment of cultural trends, literary trends, and interrupt them. Approaching *Herzog* as a novel of ideas on the grounds of its formal arrangement rather than exclusively on the grounds of its concern with ideas has the highly significant advantage over and above the approaches surveyed that it uncovers Bellow's uncommonly complicated and tightly knit narrative web which seems to go unnoticed when the rhetoric of form is disregarded.

Chapter 5

HERZOG: THE ENCYCLOPEDIC CHARACTER

Bellow's characterization in *Herzog* goes against the grain of contemporary literary theory by defying the separation of thought from emotions and actions, of authorial and historical genesis from the 'autonomous' text, of the sublime from the animistic, of the mysterious from the known, of type from character. Bellow's insistence upon character in *Herzog* is almost aggressive. He relies upon his depiction and development of his protagonist -- of man **thinking**, not commonly regarded as promising for generating interest in a modern novel -- to capture and hold the reader's attention through lengthy passages of speculation. The play of Herzog's intellect, imagination, memory, emotion, blindness and insight, desires and fears carries the weight of the narrative. The story of Herzog's life and his eventual vision of the world is closely analogous to Bellow's own and includes references to historical persons and facts as well as fictional ones.[1] But for critical purposes it is essential to distinguish between Bellow and his protagonist in the text. The formalist demand that the text be regarded as an autonomous construction is fully valid in the sense that the average reader should not need to know the author's personal history to make sense of the narrative; in this sense the narrative must be autotelic -- self contained. And the most immediately accessible elements in the construction of a narrative -- the ones that delineate the surface structure -- are character(s) and/ or the narrative consciousness, however minimally personalized, as well as setting, however minimally identifiable in time and space.

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[1] A number of critics note the hazy boundary between Bellow and Herzog. Brigitte Scheer-Schäzler says in *Saul Bellow:* "of course the book has strong autobiographical traits, as Bellow readily admits.... The resemblance between some aspects of Herzog's experience and those of Bellow is undeniable, as the childhood episodes in Canada demonstrate.... [L]ittle pieces of 'reality,' remarks that have remained in Bellow's consciousness and are reported elsewhere as 'facts,' reappear in *Herzog*" (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1972) (92-93). In "Bellow Observed: A Serial Portrait" Rosette Lamont's account of Bellow emphasizes the similarity between Bellow's life while writing *Herzog* and that of his protagonist. Apart from both being recently divorced for the second time there is an interesting similarity between the name and appearance of Bellow's estate Tivoli and that of Herzog's near Ludeyville. Tivoli refers to a board game and Ludeyville refers to *ludere*, or play.

Herzog is a device that serves as an intermediary between the surface and the deep structures. He serves the hermeneutic function, customarily reserved for the so called 'authorial' narrator in the nineteenth-century novel, of ensuring maximum accessibility to the deep structure by analyzing, interpreting, assessing aspects of the narrative, and of placing it in a broader historical context.[2] But Herzog differs from the authorial narrator in three important ways: he is also the protagonist who "reads" his own actions, as Abbott points out; unlike the authorial narrator Herzog does not provide a stable point of reference because during the course of the narrative he changes and modifies his interpretation of himself and other characters as a result; and most importantly, because a character as well as the hermeneutic consciousness, his authority is not equal to that of the authorial narrator. Eventually Herzog must also be analyzed in the context of other characters and on terms equal to theirs. As a result of Bellow's stratification of hermeneutic authority in *Herzog*, the characters, including the protagonist, lend themselves to readings at different levels of complexity, ranging from animistic types or grotesques to characters of psychological credibility and depth, as I will demonstrate in the next chapter. Here I will predominantly focus on Herzog in relation to traditional construction of character.

Presentation and Representation

Herzog himself is a composite character and each aspect of his construction has an important function in the narrative. The *schlemiel's* capacity for "bungling," for misunderstanding himself and others, for getting himself into hopeless situations, humanizes the loftiness of the erudite *philosophus gloriosus*. Herzog's shifts from elevated theoretical dissection of trends in contemporary life and thought and their historical and ideological underpinnings to plain language and personal spite -- his shifts from incisive wit to witticisms -- have the same effect. But Herzog also serves a more important function for the average reader whose familiarity with names belonging to the canons of Western thought may be greater than that of their theoretical formulations. By shifting from the role of the *alazon* to the *eiron*, by adopting Socratic irony to expose central points in theories by reformulating them in plain language and by pointing up their limitations, Herzog makes modern man's ideological heritage accessible at the same time as he traces its roots and renders harmless invidious assumptions accepted as facts. Because Herzog is an academic dedicated to the History of Ideas, his sometimes lengthy dissections of ideas are fully integrated into the narrative fabric and the verisimilitude of character. But by grounding the motivation for Herzog's questioning of contemporary thought and values in personal crises peculiar to modern man, Herzog is also the middle class Everyman in democratic society, even if with a most specific relevance to America.

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[2] Bellow's method resembles that of Laurence Sterne which Ian Watt describes in *The Rise of the Novel:* "Sterne, like Fielding, was a scholar and a wit, and he was equally anxious to have full freedom to comment on the action of his novel or indeed on anything else. But whereas Fielding had gained this freedom only by impairing the verisimilitude of his narrative, Sterne was able to achieve exactly the same ends without any such sacrifice by the simple but ingenious expedient of locating his reflections in the mind of his hero -- the most recondite allusions could thus be laid at the door of the notorious inconsequences of the processes of the association of ideas" (333).

Herzog thus not only reflects upon but is himself a reflection of man on a number of levels. He is mortal man as he has shown himself through the ages -- a *chiaroscuro* of good and evil, certainty and doubt, blindness and insight. He is representative of man in modern Western society, beset with the doubts peculiar to the age as well as the sins and hopes of the past. He is also contemporary man in American mass society whose democratic right to upward social mobility may be easier to exercise than his democratic rights to social and political power -- let alone his constitutional rights to "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness" or *"felicitas"* as Herzog refers to the last (96). As the American intellectual Herzog must reconsider in a contemporary context his pursuit of "the true the good and the beautiful" as well as, yet again, reckon with the cultural bonds that pull against the Declaration of Independence from the Old World, long after national independence has been gained (213). Even worse, because an American Jew, Herzog must come to terms with the fact that although Americans were instrumental in defeating the Germans in the Second World War, the selectively adopted ideological formulations employed to rationalize the devastation of the Jewish people have invaded America, feeding into the national imagination through the national intellect. Thus revived, the nihilism of "those German existentialists," notably that of Nietzsche whose writings were appropriated, perverted, and adapted to the propaganda of the National Socialist movement, continues the Holocaust in a most subtle way as the annihilation of the spirit, the self -- eating away at the national and literary character already undermined by the schism in modern thought (271). Herzog can also be read as the self in the novel, as intellect in the novel, even as the embodiment of the contemporary novel.

Character of Consciousness

Not only a showcase of polemic and comic types and mimetic elements, Herzog is also a character of consciousness, and because the narrative is fully internalized, all the different types of characters function as aspects of his psyche. Much of the power of *Herzog* is due to Bellow's convincing depiction of a consciousness in a state of crisis, struggling away from crisis. Herzog's mind provides the primary setting and action or activity in the narrative, as is predominantly the case in modernist narrative. By adopting modernist disruption of language and thought in Herzog's notes in the opening of the New York episode to indicate the surge of largely unconscious drives that determine thought and action, Bellow effectively underpins Herzog's mental breakdown. Their initial disjunctiveness and incongruity brings home Herzog's utter confusion and possible madness. The author of "several articles and a book, *Romanticism and Christianity*" as well as *"The State of Nature in 17th and 18th Century English and French Political Philosophy,"* which was translated into French and German," "now on many reading lists," Herzog is reduced to scribbling apparently disconnected notes "on scraps of paper" (5, 2). In counterpoint to signs of incapacity to cohere, Herzog demonstrates the same kind of smirky self-satisfaction as Camus' judge Clamence in *The Fall* when he methodically enumerates the extent of his own culpability, "positively enjoying the hardness and factual rigor of his judgment"; "a bad husband -- twice," "a loving but bad father," "an ungrateful child," "an indifferent citizen," "affectionate but remote" brother, "[w]ith his friends, an egotist. With love lazy. With brightness, dull. With power, passive. With his own soul, evasive" (5, 4-5). As the narrative progresses, the real causes for the distress that motivates Herzog's generally odd behaviour unfold and self-justifications replace his falsely courageous acceptance of absolute failure before he reaches a more balanced and sincere view of himself and his own intricate combination of guilt and innocence in his situation.

Given the situation Herzog finds himself in, his odd behaviour is understandable. Meanwhile pursuing his *"important experiment,"* whereby his own life of tending his house and family was to *"prove"* the value of "the ordinary" and *"[t]he strength of a man's virtue or spiritual capacity measured by his ordinary life,"* as defined by *"Montaigne and Pascal,"* and to refute nihilism and *"Heidegger"* on modern *"civilization"* as *"the second Fall of Man into the quotidian,"* Herzog had neglected his academic study that was to "show[ ] how life could be lived by renewing universal connections" and had been scooped by another (106, 39). And meanwhile "fiddling" away his own academic career, Herzog opened academic doors to Madeleine who is "going to be the professor" and helped his best friend Gersbach get established as a cultural prophet by "introduc[ing] him to cultural Chicago" (51, 268, 58). But Herzog had also neglected his own wife and been a cuckold for some years previous to his divorce from Madeleine. And Herzog accepted comfort from Gersbach, Madeleine's lover, both during his marital tribulations and for six months after the divorce, "[u]ntil I found out he gave me the grief he was consoling me for" (216). A number of other unpleasant discoveries force Herzog to recognize his own gullibility so that he feels driven to reconsider "his entire life" and the world as he thought he knew it in search of something to explain why someone of his intellect could remain oblivious while "the sharpies cleaned him out" (5). Herzog's specialization in the history of ideas provides psychologically credible motivation for his reassessment of his own immediate and distant past, of his own situation in the context of social history, of his own ideas in the context of those who had and potentially have the power to affect his life directly or indirectly. Also, Herzog's method of reassessment by analysis, questioning, interpretation, and refutation is psychologically credible in view of his profession; these are the means his training has provided him with to solve problems. But, of course, therein also lies an important element that sets Bellow's depiction of the workings of the mind apart from that most common in modernist narrative.

Herzog is altogether as credible a dramatization of consciousness and the powerful unconscious drives that disrupt conscious thought as for instance Faulkner's in *The Sound and the Fury*. Yet Bellow's method departs from his in a number of significant ways. The most obvious difference is the level of coherence, of conscious, purposeful cognitive thought, as well as in the extent to which the characters are at the mercy of psychological and social drives. Faulkner explores a broad range of modes of being -- emotive, intellectual, instinctive, physical, creative, spiritual -- by tracing dominant and fairly consistent personality traits in separate characters. Bellow predominantly explores this range in his inconsistent central character at different points in the narration but he continues its development, by parallel and contrast, through other characters as seen through Herzog's consciousness. Faulkner aims for maximum immediacy and emotional closeness to character, whereas Bellow aims for critical distance as well as closeness. Faulkner's character study in *The Sound and the Fury* suggests that cultural deterioration is to blame for the characters' losses and defeats by offering Dilsey as a natural, innocent, spiritually pure and healthy counterpoint to the Compton family's decline. Bellow is explicit where Faulkner is implicit in his social criticism and Bellow rejects the dichotomy between cultural experience and deterioration as opposed to natural innocence and purity, demonstrating that by enlisting all of his faculties man can benefit from experience and keep in check destructive natural and cultural tendencies. Herzog's leaps of mind, flashes of insight, his arguments and ponderings variously truncated by a different train of thought or returns to earlier ones abruptly left off or by sensory data regarding the body or his environment; these capture at times the pathetic, at times the poetic effects peculiar to authors such as Faulkner and Woolf, as well as the effect of comic interruption in *Ulysses*.

The complaints that *Herzog* is too subjective, too hermetic, too everything associated with a hostile view of modernism, affirm better than anything Bellow's successful adoption of the modernist dramatization of consciousness. But the quixotic workings of Herzog's mind also resemble Tristram Shandy's. And above all Herzog's thought-processes also resemble the progress of conversation in *Crotchet Castle* and produce a similar comic but critical effect -- a combination frequently encountered in other authors who make full use of the disruptive effect of comedy, consistently or intermittently, such as Swift, Fielding, and Dickens. Very subtly Bellow shows that novelistic character gains in vitality without losing contemporary significance and applicability by allowing the critical energy produced by the methods and insights of older masters to feed into the aesthetic sensibilities produced by the methods and insights of contemporary masters.

Character of Sensibility

And the nature of Herzog's crisis, the motivation that initially propels the narration through the dialectic between his letters and his recollections, calls attention to the continuity between modernist depiction of consciousness and the character of sensibility that first emerged in the seventeenth century. In step with the rise of the middle class, this type of character found a fuller expression in the epistolary form in the eighteenth when the novel came to be recognized as a separate genre. Herzog himself underscores these affinities when he refers to himself as one of the "lower-class boys and girls who adopt the aesthetic mode, the mode of rich sensibility" (307). Herzog's letters start out as cries for *"help,"* telling his various lady friends that he needs it *"in the worst way"* (11). Herzog's letters, like those of Richardson's Clarissa, report extensive conspiracy and attempts at violation. On the broadest level, Herzog feels himself victimized by his own culture that conspires against individuality and private life, be it "Internal Revenue regulations" that regard "[m]an's life" as "business," scientists and national leaders who act as if modern man is nuclear-waste-able, intellectuals who negate human value in general and that of modern man in particular (21). On a personal level Herzog feels that a conspiracy of silence made him the last person possible to discover that he was a cuckold. Another conspiracy that Herzog reports culminates in the attempts of his former friend and lawyer Himmelstein to assist Madeleine in getting him committed *"to an institution"* by getting his psychiatrist Dr. Edvig to confirm that he *"was crazy enough to be put in Manteno or Elgin"* (35). In this conspiracy money is at stake because Himmelstein, who professed that he loved Herzog "more than [his own] effing family," bullied him into signing a life insurance policy covering "mental breakdown" as well as sickness and death (85). Even if the violation Herzog suffers is not of a kind with Clarissa's, there is the suggestion of a parallel between the effects that repeated and manifold betrayals have upon the self of both characters.

Moreover, Gersbach attempts to 'possess' Herzog and is successful to the degree that he steps into Herzog's role as Madeleine's mate and June's father; moves into the house Herzog leased and repaired before being thrown out; gets acquainted with the writings of Martin Buber through Herzog; gets a house for his actual family and a school for his son in Chicago through Herzog, as well as a position for himself as "Gersbach the public figure, Gersbach the poet, the television intellectual, lecturing at the Hadassah on Martin Buber" (58). Herzog says to Ramona: "'People say that Gersbach imitates me -- my walk, my expressions. He's a second Herzog'" (190). Ramona responds: "'Anyway, he convinced Madeleine that he was superior to the original'" (190). Thus 'possessed' in the most thorough manner, Herzog escapes the violation Clarissa suffered from Lovelace, but only by proxy, he suspects. He says in his only letter to Gersbach:

"You will not reach me through [Madeleine], however. I know you sought me in her flesh. But I am no longer there" (318). Madeleine also gets her share of Herzog, an academic career and some of his inheritance from his father which he suspects she stowed away; "They divvied me up," Herzog says to his friend Luke Asphalter (268). But eventually there is also a trace of a Shamela in Herzog because in hindsight he seriously doubts his own "vartue" and suspects that his own duplicity was of signal importance in the attempts to violate his self. And unlike purely epistolary narratives which serve to report the protagonists' battles, Herzog's letters **are** the battles because the central conflict in the narrative is internalized.

Hero, Villain/ Opponent, Helper

The character that gets involved in mighty battles and goes back to the prehistoric beginning of narrative is the hero. Herzog describes his own "character" as "anachronistic" and indeed Herzog is a hero -- a warrior or a military leader as the German meaning of the name 'Herzog' indicates (4). As Raman Selden notes in *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*, Vladimir Propp discovered in his studies of Russian fairy tales that to every hero there is a villain, a sought after person who may be a princess, her father, a false hero, a helper, and a provider (56-57). Selden also notes how A. J. Greimas found that these narrative elements, or 'actants' as he called them, had universal applicability to narrative if simplified and adapted to sentence structure in binary oppositions: subject/ object, sender/ receiver, helper/ opponent (57-58). These narrative elements are in clear evidence in *Herzog* even if some critics have noted a lack of "Otherness" -- villain or opponent. The explanation is that Herzog, in part because a subjective character, of consciousness, enters all the actant positions.

Herzog departs from the conventional hero traversing through external reality by being both the hero and the setting for Bellow's battle of this century; his mind -- thoughts, emotions, instincts -- is the battlefield where common humanity fights the spirit of nihilism for the survival of the self. During his pursuit of the enemy Herzog must enter territory that he has resolutely left unexplored within himself. Only when he has confronted the "dragons" by whom "[e]very treasure is guarded" -- the dragons by which "you can tell" that the treasure is "valuable," as Herzog explains -- can he claim the treasure of a self that is known yet mysterious and coexists independently but harmoniously with cultural otherness (187). Within the context of the surface structure Herzog's first name 'Moses' as well as his surname comment ironically upon his defeated aspirations to rescue "the ordinary" from nihilism, from "the quotidian," from "the Void"; he has no social clout, political or spiritual, and only the survival of his own solitary self is dependent upon the outcome of his battles. But within the context of the deep structure Herzog lives up to his names as a warrior and a spiritual leader, fighting for the value of self, fighting for the value of character, leading his 'nation' away from hostile territory and enslavement by tyrannical theoretical constructs threatening to annihilate both self and character.

Bellow compounds the problem of detecting the villain or antagonist by adding variations to the narrative actants, shifting the roles from one character to another, eventually dissolving the dialectic between hero and villain. Herzog in the past saw himself as a hero but Herzog in the main narrative sees him as villain or a false hero who lost himself to cultural roles and postures; therefore the formative influence of his society and historical time are also his antagonists and much of the narrative involves his battle with these elements. Herzog in the main narrative initially sees friends and family who harm him in various ways as villains who compounded their evil by using deception to make him accomplice to his own destruction. Only after Herzog has failed to carry through his intention to kill the 'real' villains Madeleine and Gersbach, which would have made him a real villain, does he fully acknowledge that they were actually false villains to his false hero. Herzog himself turned out to be his own worst enemy. Bellow brings home this fact when Herzog halts Madeleine's attempt at the Chicago police station to make him a suspect for intending to kill her and sees in her eyes "a total will that he should die. This was infinitely more than ordinary hatred. It was a vote for his non-existence" (301). She and Gersbach can appropriate Herzog's cultural self; they can "divvie[ ]" "up" his roles or style -- his professorship and his "elegant ways" -- but as long as he resists or fights back his real self remains inviolable (268). But even if Herzog of the past is also the real villain, antagonist, dragon, by being his own worst enemy, the new Herzog emerging in Ludeyville cannot slay him because in him also lies the treasure and in him slumbers the true hero who, typically for a would-be hero, for a knight, preferred "White Horse" when offered to pick a label for his father's moonshine (333). Herzog's account strongly indicates that if he was his own worst enemy, the same applies to Madeleine. He thinks at one point: "It would not be practical for her to hate herself. Luckily, God sends a substitute, a husband" (174). Herzog's observation and his own complicity in the destruction of his old self indicates that Madeleine's desire for his annihilation seems to be rooted in an actual desire to annihilate her own self with Herzog serving as a substitute.

The role of the helper also shifts around. Ramona, who lives by the maxim *"mens sana in corpore sano,"*helps, like "a priestess of Isis," to restore Herzog's faith, care, and respect for himself -- his potency of mind and body which deserted him during his marriage to Madeleine (160). She also encourages Herzog to consider that a part of his dilemma may lie in man's mysterious nature -- that he could not fully count on knowing what Madeleine and Gersbach were about because they are mysterious in their complexity. Ramona points out to him that there is a side to himself that he fails to acknowledge: "'You like to come on meek and tame, and cover up the devil that's in you. Why put that little devil down? Why not make friends with him -- well, why not?'" (15). Ramona helps him further by acting like the cricket alerting Pinocchio that his nose is growing long, pointing out Herzog's postures. The "meek and tame" is a pose that Herzog adopted when he *"got into a religious competition"* with Gersbach, Madeleine, and his psychiatrist Dr. Edvig: *"To see how it would feel to act with humility"* (64). When Herzog adopts the extreme opposite posture Ramona laughs affectionately and says: "What is funny is how completely you answer any question. You are a funny man.... It's the way you try to sound rough or reckless, though -- like a guy from Chicago -- that's even more amusing.... It's an act. Swagger. It's not really you" (183). Herzog notes the same "[r]eadiness to answer all questions" in Gersbach who would never "admit ignorance of any matter": "He finished all your sentences, rephrased all your thoughts, explained everything" (155). And Herzog's "rough and reckless" Chicago swagger is in Himmelstein's every gesture, every turn of phrase. Luke Asphalter is another helper. Asphalter tells Herzog about Madeleine and Gersbach's affair and thereby becomes the catalyst for Herzog's heroic quest. Asphalter also helps Herzog understand why he is "writing impertinent letters" "to the newspapers, to people in public life, to friends and relatives and at last to the dead, his own obscure dead, and finally the famous dead" (1). When Asphalter describes Tina Zokóly's exercise for handling grief, of playing dead and reviewing his whole life, as if he were facing death, considering what he "really thought" about "[w]hoever you loved, or hated" -- the "[r]eality, not illusion" -- Herzog realizes the kinship between his own letters, Asphalter's exercise, and nihilism: "the old *memento mori*, the monk's skull on the table, brought up to date" (270, 273, 271).

But above all Herzog has to be his own helper and employ what he calls "creative reason": imagination harnessed by reason but led by emotion, and instinct for the right direction, towards his treasure (185). Upon his return from Martha's Vineyard where he goes in a rather unheroic attempt to escape the enemy, only to discover his error, Herzog undertakes his first concentrated encounter with his "devil" -- his own past with Daisy, Madeleine, and then he refers to his imagination as if it were a lance: "you must aim the imagination also at yourself, point-blank" (118). In his distant past he discovers his inheritance that he has mismanaged much as he did the money from his father: his family's capacity for faith, hope, and charity. These attributes may be least obvious in Aunt Zipporah's refusal to alleviate the poverty of her brother Jonah Herzog and in her diatribes "delivered in a critical, damaging, nasal voice" on Sarah Herzog's tendency to spoil her children and on her brother's attempts to be other than his nature dictates (141). Zipporah is of a piece, true to her own values and conviction based on a sense of reality that tells her that her brother's attempts at being a gangster are bound to fail -- the one thing she and her sister-in-law agree upon. Rather than give money she shows "her harsh affection" by bringing an egg for the children and through its symbolic significance affirms her faith that her brother's hopes for a better life will be best fulfilled without her assistance if only he looks himself straight in the eye and perseveres (146). Zipporah is the embodiment of Blake's line from "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," a "favorite source" of Herzog's that he recalls a few times: *"Opposition is true friendship"* (125). Sarah Herzog shows selflessness and a capacity to keep one eye on past affluence, the other on present poverty in the slums of Montreal; to meet loss, pains, indignities with proper emotion yet retain her resilience.

If Zipporah's faith, hope, and charity are predominantly directed by harsh reason, Sarah's are directed by an imagination that keeps alive "archaic ... legends, with angels and demons" yet also envisions the future possibilities open to her children if she gives them a good start in life (147). Jonah's are predominantly directed by passion, style and his strong sense of self, his impressive "dignity" of *"I,"* despite his failures and decline in fortune (149). But he also allows the dignity of others full scope. Refusing to become a servant to death by becoming a grave-digger, "sit at deathbeds," "[w]ash corpses," or beg at the "cemetery," he is willing, if by no means enthusiastic, to help their drunkard lodger Ravitch, when helpless with drink, get into the house and out of his dirtied pants, coaxing him with the kind of laughter that accepts his human frailty (149). Ravitch's high-minded aspirations to save his lost family from Russia are endlessly defeated by his own weakness. Zipporah has the capacity to yield humane if abrasive opposition to those she cares for, Jonah to restore human dignity through laughter at quixotic human nature rather than at the individual, Sarah to make clear the relationship between life and death through gestures that speak clearly, if late, to Herzog. Herzog's memories are by no means idyllic.

Bellow depicts an image of chaos and clashes between temperaments, opinions, between past luxury and present poverty, seemingly impossible hopes and actual defeats in the scenes from Herzog's distant past. But above all these scenes give the impression of interconnectedness and acceptance of the expansive range, the unpredictability in the predictability of the human spirit. Herzog's encounter with his heritage is a turning point in his recovery of equilibrium.

But before Herzog can discover what he is, he must discover what he is not; he must fully recognize and come to terms with the extent to which he has allowed himself to to lead a lopsided existence with a cultural or personal Other as master to his slave. In this endeavour of self discovery, his main opponents turn out also to be highly important helpers: "Moses refused to know evil. But he could not refuse to experience it. And therefore others were appointed to do it to him, and then to be accused (by him) of wickedness" (245). Herzog's cultural heritage also turns out to be his helper as well as opponent. Diverse lines of poetry, from the Bible, the *Iliad*, nursery rhymes, Pope, Blake, the Transcendentalists, to name a few; these, as well as reconsiderations of the Romantic ideals that lead to the revolution in France and America's battle for independence followed up by the pursuit of cultural and intellectual Self-Reliance, repeatedly help Herzog to view his own actions and dilemma in a new light. Thus Bellow eventually dismantles the binary opposition between opponent and helper, as he did that of villain and hero, and rearranges the hierarchy. Even if Herzog manages to shake the shackles of the invidious forces working upon and within him, it does not in itself absolve any of the villains or opponents of guilt -- be it Herzog by being blind to himself and others, Madeleine and Gersbach by deceiving and manipulating him, other friends and family by their complicity, or the cultural ethos that accommodates, encourages even, devaluation of the individual.

Gothic Character

The types of characters discussed so far, comic, polemic, mimetic, externalized through actant figures that are in turn internalized as aspects of the psyche, combine in

Herzog as a Bellowian version of the Gothic hero. The opening of *Herzog* presents the protagonist as a man possessed or at the mercy of some uncontrollable force, possibly madness: "If I'm out of my mind, it's all right with me, thought Moses Herzog" (1). The reader is told that Herzog "had fallen under a spell" and that "[h]idden in the country" he either sleeps "on a mattress without sheets -- it was his abandoned marriage bed -- or in the hammock, covered by his coat" in an "overgrown garden" with the "stars" above (1). "Normally particular about food," he eats whatever comes to hand, including bread that he shares with a rat, spread with jam shared by mice (1-2). In surroundings of Gothic deterioration, "paint scaling from the brick walls," "mouse droppings" on the kitchen table, birthday candles gnawed "down to the wicks" by field mice, Herzog wonders at the truth of "the rumor" spread by "[h]is friend, his former friend, Valentine, and his wife, his ex-wife Madeleine ... that his sanity had collapsed" (1-2). The "spell" that makes Herzog write "endlessly, fanatically, to the newspapers, to people in public life, to friends and relatives and at last to the dead, his own obscure dead, and finally the famous dead," which starts "[l]ate in spring" in New York and lasts until "the peak of summer in the Berkshires," turns out to be "involuntary" (1-2, 11). This seems to be more serious than W. H. Yeats' experimentation with automatic writing because although Herzog knows that "his scribbling, his letter-writing" is ridiculous; *"There is someone inside me. I am in his grip. When I speak of him I feel him in my head, pounding for order. He will ruin me* (11). Bellow leaves open right until the end of *Herzog* the possibility that Herzog eventually becomes mad but at the same time he encourages the assumption that the "someone" who possesses Herzog is the same as the "devil" that Herzog covers up and needs to become friends with. Indeed the combatant, distrustful, satiric tendencies of this spirit as it emerges in his letters reinforce this impression.

Through Herzog, Bellow adds some interesting twists and turns to the element of the Gothic character so that it serves to depict a contemporary sense of reality; Herzog as a possessed Gothic character is the embodiment of the schism in modern thought as well as of alienation. Herzog considered altogether external to himself the spirit he refers to as "the Void" or the quotidian into which he had tried to avoid falling; "bucking" modern "trends" in an attempt at being "a *marvellous* Herzog" and to *"save"* himself from "nihilism" by trying "to live out marvellous qualities vaguely comprehended" (93, 103, 93). He describes this spirit:

> This little demon was impregnated with modern ideas, and one in particular excited his terrible little heart: you must sacrifice your poor, squawking, niggardly individuality -- which may be nothing anyway (from an analytic viewpoint) but a persistent infantile megalomania, or (from a Marxian point of view) a stinking little bourgeois property -- to historical necessity. And to truth. And truth is true only as it brings down more disgrace and dreariness upon human beings, so that if it shows anything except evil it is illusion, and not truth. (93)

Yet this "little demon" has been thrust upon him:

> he had been taking this primitive cure, administered by Madeleine, Sandor, et cetera; so that his recent misfortunes might be seen as a collective project, himself participating, to destroy his vanity and his pretensions to a personal life so that he might disintegrate and suffer and hate, like so many others, not on anything so distinguished as a cross, but down in the mire of post-Renaissance, post humanistic, post Cartesian dissolution, next door to the Void. (93)

The spirit or "demon" of dissolution, suffering, hate, and negation of self that Herzog asserts has been forced upon him from the outside as much as from within is as alien to him as the spirit "pounding for order" who mysteriously possesses him from within, and has him in "his grip" writing letters (remindful of Mann's "spirit of narration" which narrates in 'impersonal' or perspectival narration).

Like the conventional possessed character, Herzog needs to repossess himself, but unlike the conventional one, the simple expediency of exorcism does not quite suffice because he must first recognize to what extent he has been possessed by the "little demon" of "the Void" and how it relates to the spirit of "order" that possesses him. Bellow indicates this split in Herzog's psyche in the opening of *Herzog:* "A radiant line went from mid-forehead over [Herzog's] straight nose and full, silent lips" (2). Herzog's recollections, during his three days of scuttling from New York to Martha's Vineyard and back, and then to Chicago, of the "stubbornly innocent" Herzog are satiric and merciless, as if he were viewing an alien and somewhat pitiful other. And as Cohen indicates above, Herzog repeatedly views himself in action with comic detachment. But when talking to Ramona and Simkin during this time he presents himself like King Lear, as "a man more sinned against than sinning." In his letters Herzog is "overcome by the need to explain, to have it out, to justify, to put in perspective, to clarify, to make amends" (2). Apart from a few personal letters in the beginning pleading for pity and understanding, as well as letters of explanation and apology, the underlying point of the large majority of letters is the demand that people face and take responsibility for their actions, be it a rude salesman, deceitful friends and relatives of Madeleine, people in public or academic positions. In the letters Herzog puts his own intellectual and emotional crisis into a larger perspective -- theological, social, psychological, philosophical, and historical. But predominantly the letters serve to establish a dialogue between the spirit of his time -- the *Zeitgeist* -- and the spirits who shaped it: "He realized that he was writing to the dead. To bring the shades of great philosophers up to date" (181). Also the spiritual fathers of the *Zeitgeist* must face the consequences of their actions because Herzog's personal crisis is compounded by these spirits as they haunt modern man.

The heritage that the great spirits of the past have left modern man is a negative self-image reinforced in a variety of ways; Bellow suggests throughout *Herzog* that modern man accepts definitions of himself along the lines of public power politics. As opposed to the extremely optimistic overvaluation of man and his perfectability by the Romantics, modern man is told by philosophers that he has no intrinsic value, by psychologists that he has no intrinsic nature. Herzog writes:

> *Man has a nature, but what is it? Those who have confidently described it, Hobbes, Freud, et cetera, by telling us what we are "intrinsically," are not our greatest benefactors. This is true also for Rousseau. I sympathize with Hulme's attack on the introduction by the Romantics of Perfection into human things but do not like his narrow repressiveness, either.* (129)

Modern man must be strong and exist "without cowardly illusions," without any support -- from within or without -- even if doubly fallen according to Heidegger (290). As Herzog points out, according to Nietzsche religion encourages "slave morality": "But Nietzsche himself had a Christian view of history, seeing the present moment always as some crisis, some fall from classical greatness, some corruption or evil to be saved from. I call that Christian" (54). Herzog also points out that faith according to Freud is "childish and classically depressive" (231). Nietzsche's "grand advice" is "to forget what you can't bear. The strong can forget, can shut out history" (289). Early in the narrative Herzog repeatedly checks himself when he is struck by visions of beauty in his environment -- intimations of something great and stirring within him -- just as he checks himself when he is struck by memories from his childhood: "To haunt the past like this -- to love the dead! Moses warned himself not to yield so greatly to this temptation, this peculiar weakness of his character. He was a depressive. Depressives cannot surrender childhood -- not even the pains of childhood. He understood the hygiene of the matter…" (143).

Debarred from value in himself, debarred from the value of faith, debarred from the values of the past and emotion, man seeks alternatives, but Bellow shows that alternatives offered by contemporary thinkers are useless replacements for the value of self. The modern solution to the existential dilemma, Sartre's assertion that man's meaningless existence can be made meaningful through action in the world, through roles and poses, only works as a power construct: “these aesthetic philosophers, they take a posture, but power sweeps all postures away”; “The strength to do evil is sovereignty” (75, 126). Gersbach and Madeleine embody the modern schism and the Sartrean solution in that they lack historical continuity; they fail to integrate any kind of past self into their present. They divide between themselves Herzog’s roles with the ruthlessness necessary for outstanding success in public life. Valentine Gersbach is a popularized version of Herzog -- an inauthentic version but more likely for public success -- a commercialized ‘valentine’ as compared to a *‘Herz,’’* a heart. Herzog says that Gersbach “appropriated all the emotions about him, as if by divine or spiritual right. He could do more with them, and therefore he simply took them over” (61). Gersbach has a decided edge on Herzog, with his emotionalism, his vitality, his unreserved “boom[ing] along in conversation” -- no matter whether or not he knows the subject -- in short, by being “so emphatic in style, so impressive in his glances, look[ing] so clever that you forgot to inquire whether he was making sense” (61, 72). Madeleine, likewise, has a professional edge on Herzog. She is “systematic” and has “the aggressive paranoid character, eager for power,” that Herzog lacks but recognizes as essential for academic excellence (4). In Gersbach there is no continuity of self from one version to another -- no attempt to establish coherency of self: “as soon as he slams the door of his Continental he begins to talk like Karl Marx” and as soon as he slams the door of his home with his wife Phoebe and his son Ephraim he steps through another door and into the role of a husband for Madeleine and a father for June (217). Herzog says:

> He’s a poet in mass communications.... He’s a ringmaster, popularizer, liaison for the elites. He grabs up celebrities and brings them before the public. And he makes all sorts of people feel that he has exactly what they’ve been looking for. Subtlety for the subtle. Warmth for the warm. For the crude, crudity. For the crooks, hypocrisy. Atrocity for the atrocious. Whatever your heart desires. Emotional plasma that can circulate

> in any system.... With pinochle players he plays pinochle, with rabbis it's Martin Buber, with the Hyde Park Madrigal Society he sings madrigals. (215, 217)

Madeleine, likewise, adopts different roles but not with the fluid ease of Gersbach. Like Gersbach she becomes immensely involved in one literary issue after another; "The intensity was always high. If she had one constant interest it was murder mysteries" (73). But unlike Gersbach who "won't let anything go," who "tries everything on" because he can "do" it "better," she lives each role for some time and then vehemently erases it because she prefers to keep "things separate": "Catholicism went the way of zithers and tarot cards, bread-baking and Russian civilization. And life in the country" -- and Herzog (216, 115, 118). Gersbach and Madeleine embody the modern schism in that they lack historical continuity; they fail to integrate any kind of past self into their present.

Judging by Herzog's letters, the aspirations of past and contemporary thinkers to break out of the humanist paradigm of existence, stop being slaves to religion, the past, improvement, emotion, self, have proved impossible; the paradigm has simply been inverted -- the regenerative aspects of existence cancelled. Herzog reflects upon the cancellation of creation, regeneration, in modern metaphysics: "This generation thinks -- and this is its thoughts of thoughts -- that nothing faithful, vulnerable, fragile can be durable or have any true power. Death waits for these things...." (290). Herzog traces the mutations of the concept of divinity from "Proudhon" who "says, 'God is *the* evil,'" through "God is dead," to "Death is God" (290). *"'The inspired condition,'"* Herzog writes to his old tutor Harris Pulver, is only thought to exist:

> *in the negative and is so pursued in philosophy and literature as well as in sexual experience, or with the aid of narcotics, on in "philosophical," "gratuitous" crime and similar paths of horror. (It never seems to occur to such "criminals" that to behave with decency to another human being might also be "gratuitous.") Intelligent observers have pointed out that "spiritual"*

> *honor or respect formerly reserved for justice, courage, temperance, mercy, may now be earned in the negative by the grotesque.* (164)

Herzog speculates whether

> *this development is possibly related to the fact that so much of 'value' has been absorbed by technology itself. It is 'good' to electrify a primitive area. Civilization and even morality are implicit in technological transformation. ... Can virtue compete. New techniques are in themselves* bien pensant *and represent not only rationality but benevolence. Thus a crowd, a herd of* bien pensants *has been driven into nihilism, which, as is now well known, has Christian and moral roots and for its wildest frenzies offers a constructive rationale. (see Polyani, Herzog, et al.)* (164-65)

Herzog reiterates that modern man's discontent with the present is due to the infiltration of public power politics into personal life; *"Thus he is provoked to take revenge upon himself, a revenge of derision, contempt, denial of transcendence. This last, his denial, is based upon former conceptions of human life or on images of man at present impossible to maintain"* (164). "Trans-descendence" is "the new fashionable word" that Herzog identifies as coined to describe the inversion of values, the inversion of transcendence (176). The example of Madeleine and Gersbach demonstrates that the inverted form of independence is other-dependence; instead of self-reliance in emotional life, in social advancement, in thought and action, there is other-reliance, appropriation of an other. Trans-descendence, eventually, inverts the pursuit of life into one of death because man foregoes *"an inspired condition, to know truth, to be free, to love another, to consummate existence, to abide with death in clarity of consciousness -- without which, racing and conniving to evade death, the spirit holds its breath and hopes to be immortal because it does not live"* (165).

Right until Herzog receives his death sentence from Madeleine's eyes -- "'For cowards, Not being!'" -- at the Chicago police station, his letters demonstrate his shift of responsibility for his own failed aspirations, his own shortcomings, from himself upon an other, private or public, in particular upon the ideology of the world he lives in, haunted as it is by commands from the spirits of the past. Bellow frames Herzog's period of possession by the spirit of nihilism with references to nausea and judging. At the New York court Herzog is struck by extreme nausea and as he arrives at the Chicago police station he has another attack of nausea, in part as a result from vertigo after his collision with the German "Falcon," but also because of his most extreme attack of scepticism (287). Herzog's spirit of writing fights scepticism with scepticism but his letters are "… *Trepverter* -- retorts that came too late, when you were already on your way down the stairs" (3). They are delayed reactions to a personal situation, delayed consideration of a side to reality he had chosen to ignore, delayed distrust of others, delayed show of mental muscle, and somewhat belated responses to the "shades" of the past as they manifest themselves in the *Zeitgeist* -- and, as it turns out, in Herzog himself. The impulse to demolish the other in his letters is there, even when battling with a tempering impulse:

> … Herzog was fairly deadly in polemics. His polite formulas often carried much spleen. His docile ways, his modest conduct -- he didn't deceive himself. The certainty of being right, a flow of power, rose in his bowels and burned in his legs. Queer, the luxurious victories of anger! There was passionate satire in Herzog. Still he knew that the demolition of an error was not *it*. He began to have a new horror of winning, of the victories of untrammeled autonomy. (129)

Herzog's ponderings upon the mutations of the inversions that have occurred in ideas about God and the dismissal of all that is "vulnerable" when arriving at the police station in Chicago are interrupted by a voice negating his thoughts with scornful jeers such as: "'History is the history of cruelty, not love, as soft men think! … There is only practicality. If the old God exists he must be a murderer. But the one true god is death….' Herzog heard this as if it were spoken slowly inside his head" (290). At other times the spirit of his times tells him that also the pursuit of love is only for the soft -- belongs to "the feminine realm" (188).

The first step in Herzog's repossession of himself is to recognize that the spirit of nihilism and the spirit of order are dependent upon each other as shadow is upon light and that these opposite but interdependent forces are part of rather than alien to himself. In Ludeyville Herzog recognizes that once his "arbitrary withdrawal of proud subjectivity from the collective and historical progress of mankind" was shattered, he himself participated in the existential power battle and comedy of the absurd, notable throughout in his self-mockery, right from his initial session of self-judgement in New York: "Turning this thing, "my personal life," into a circus, into gladiatorial combat. Or tamer forms of entertainment. To make a joke of your "shame," your ephemeral dimness, and show why you deserve your pain" (307). And to Asphalter, Herzog admits that his letters are in fact a repetition of his aspirations with the "ordinary," to allot cosmic significance to his own life, so that in sinning against Herzog, Madeleine and Gersbach sinned against the world. By calling upon the wealth of his learning he brings the whole world upon them in punishment: "if they don't suffer they've gotten away from me. And I've filled the world with letters to prevent their escape.... But they are constructions" (272).

But the main step in Herzog's depossession of the spirit of inverted values, his repossession of himself, is to "make friends with" the "little devil" in the sense of establishing his common humanity with his various enemies but within his own hierarchy of values rather than by synthesis: *"the intellectual has been a Separatist. And what kind of synthesis is a Separatist likely to come up with?"* (322). In Herzog's last letters his spirit of order busily puts nihilism and existential angst in the right perspective. Herzog identifies nihilism as a middle class phenomenon in a letter to Professor Mermelstein and notes that its underlying schismatic extremes run counter to the basic reality of middle class privileges and comfort:

> *How we all love extreme cases and apocalypses, fires, drownings, stranglings, and the rest of it. The bigger our mild, basically ethical, safe middle classes grow the more radical excitement is in demand. Mild or moderate truthfulness or accuracy seems to have no pull at all. Just what we need now. . . . [S]uch convictions in the mouths of safe, comfortable people playing at crisis, alienation, apocalypse and desperation, make me sick. We must get it out of our heads that this is a doomed time, that we are waiting for the end, and the rest of it, mere junk from fashionable magazines. Things are grim enough without these shivery games. People frightening one another -- a poor sort of moral exercise. … [T]he advocacy and praise of suffering take us in the wrong direction and those of us who remain loyal to civilization must not go for it.* (316-17)

Herzog acknowledges the importance of having "the power to employ pain," but he also points out that if this power is not to be destructive only the individual must either have the premise that religion offers, to engage in the special spiritual *"exercise"* of transforming the *"experience"* of *"evil"* into *"good,"* or have *"time"* and *"opportunity" "to repent, to be illuminated"* (317).

Herzog emphasizes the fundamental difference between the gruesome destruction of *"human beings … by pain, when they have the added torment of losing their humanity first, so that their death is a total defeat"* and the intellectual pose of not being *"'afraid of suffering' and … other such cocktail-party expressions"* (317). He adds: *"Why not say rather that people of powerful imagination, given to dreaming deeply and to raising up marvelous and self-sufficient fictions, turn to suffering sometimes to cut into their bliss, as people pinch themselves to feel awake"* (317). Herzog admits his own culpability in the cultivation of *"suffering"* as *"a more extended form of life, a striving for true wakefulness and an antidote to illusion"* but has come to recognize that he *"can take no moral credit for it"* ; *"I am willing without further exercise in pain to open my heart. And this needs no* *doctrine or theology of suffering"* (317). One of Herzog's last letters is to the spiritual father of nihilism, Nietzsche, whom Herzog exorcises by putting his theories in their proper context, rather than by exercising the "common primal crime" of "murdering the primal father, eating his body," that "Freud, Róheim et cetera believe" to be "the origin of social order" (303). Herzog expands upon his insight that the impulse behind nihilism is "the old *memento mori*" -- a desire to shatter illusion and pretence -- but that Nietzsche's *"system"* was *"perverted"* in its *"adoption"* (271, 319). Herzog emphasizes the importance of survival, pointing out that Nietzsche's theory showed contempt for ordinary *"mankind,"* both *"the laboring rabble"* and the *"educated rabble"* (319). Even Nietzsche's Übermensch, *"the Dionysian spirit"* traversing for a *"higher education"* through *"Evil," "Destruction," "pain,"* would eventually have to be measured by his capacity for *"survival"*; *"your extremists must survive. No survival, no Amor Fati. Your immoralists also eat meat. They ride the bus. They are only the most bus-sick travelers.... Perverted, your ideas are no better than those of the Christianity you condemn"* (319).

Bellow also employs the Gothic character of possession to indicate Herzog's break away from alienation to self-possession. Having used his time and opportunity in Ludeyville to depossess himself of the other-directed spirit of his times by clearing out the "perverted" ideas of the past, like Mrs. Tuttle, wife to "the master spirit of Ludeyville," who is busy cleaning his house when the novel concludes, Herzog takes time to "loaf" in the Ludeyville woods, like Whitman in "Song of Myself" yet without consciously "invit[ing] his soul" (1. 4). Bellow leaves out Herzog's middle name Elkanah in the opening and only indicates it with the initial "E." until a policeman files a report on him in the Chicago police station, for the illegal possession of firearms. Elkanah means 'possessed by God.' Thus possessed Herzog in Ludeyville comes up with all the answers that escaped him when he most needed them; the *Trepverter*, the *"esprit de l'escalier,"* the wit that strikes you when you find yourself at the bottom of the stairs. And thus possessed in a "too strange state" Herzog gets up from the bottom when he wanders about the woods surrounding his property: "mixture of clairvoyance and spleen, *esprit de l'escalier*, noble inspirations, poetry and nonsense, ideas, hyperesthesia -- wandering about like this, hearing forceful but indefinite music within, seeing things, violet fringes about the clearest objects" (325). The last "five-cent synthesis" that Herzog offers himself and mankind as a solution to the modern dilemma foreshadows this state of being: *"Read Confucius again. With vast populations, the world must turn Chinese"* (311). Although partly in jest, this reference to Chinese philosophy is an important foregrounding of Herzog's acceptance of 'yin' and 'yang,' light and darkness, life and death, good and evil, knowledge and mystery. In the woods Herzog experiences a flash of insight -- a feeling of oneness with nature and God: "The silence sustained him, and the brilliant weather, the feeling that he was easily contained by everything about him *Within the hollowness of God*, as he noted,*and deaf to the final multiplicity of facts*, as well as, *blind to ultimate distances"* (325). Paradoxical elements are in perfect balance: brilliant/ blind, sustaining silence/ deaf, contained by/ hollowness. Through the pun on 'hallow' Herzog reaches a compromise between the intellect and the heart, scepticism and faith. The philosophical void (Nietzsche's concept of the tuning fork used as a cognitive hammer to sound out the hollowness of idols) and the spiritual shelter (the feeling of being sustained, "knowledge" of "hearts") are here united and accepted as one (340).

Herzog's messages to his mother are the opening and closure of his "involuntary" letter writing, framing the themes of life and death that occupy his mind, and the movement from instability to balance. His first letter, which is only a fragmented opening, is tentative and about to explain: "Dear mother, As to why I haven't visited your grave in so long ..." (11). Herzog's last letter is to God, to whom "he jotted several lines" to confess his human shortcomings in his desire "to do [God's] unknowable will," but his message to his mother is not epistolary: "he wanted to say to his mother": *"I want to send you, and others, the most loving wish I have in my heart. This is the only way I have to reach out -- out where it is incomprehensible. I can only pray toward it. So … Peace!* (325, 326). From this point onwards, Herzog's tendency to both elevate and ridicule his situation makes way for a more direct and personal analysis of the nature of his own self in mental note form. Herzog accepts his own paradoxical self: *"My balance comes from instability. Not organization, or courage, as with other people.... Must play the instrument I've got"* (330). The nature of Herzog's faith in himself and in something larger than himself is not the either/ or of Kierkegaard, supported by theoretical arguments, but a *"knowledge"* of the *"hearts,"* with the recognition that the *"strange organization"* of the body *"will die,"* but *"something, something, happiness... 'Thou movest me,' That leaves no choice"* and cannot be refuted with *"arguments"* (340).

Character of *Bildung*

Combined with Bellow's Gothic variation of the possessed hero is the *Bildung* hero who grows with experience, in Herzog's case uniting "wisdom, experience, history, *Wissenschaft, Bildung, Wahrheit*" as he puts it (23). Bradbury suggests in *Saul Bellow* that *Herzog* is "a mock *Bildungsroman*," that traces "the story of, as [Herzog] says, 'how I rose from humble origins to complete disaster'" (72). The testing of Herzog's growth through experience is entirely in accordance with yet considerably more subtle than the conventional testing of the *Bildung* hero. The test of Herzog's *Bildung* is entirely in agreement with Bellow's development of the theme of independence. *Herzog* is a novel that explicitly rejects the impulse to dictate how others should view and experience reality. It is a novel that implicitly argues that only by reviving the Transcendentalist ideal of Self-Reliance and by tempering it by scepticism grounded in experience can the individual American and the nation as a whole fulfill the democratic aims upon which the nation was founded; to resist being **alienated** from the "**inalienable** Rights" to "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness" specified in the Declaration of Independence.

The final chapter of *Herzog* develops Herzog's recognition of his own human interdependence as well as his Declaration of Independence, and both are tested in the novel. Even if Herzog's opportunity to recollect in tranquility and reflect upon his experience is instrumental for getting him through his crisis so that it contributes to his inner growth, his interaction with the other characters amply demonstrates that if "lessons of the Real" are not to be destructive only, every man needs constructive support. This Herzog gets from Ramona, Asphalter, and his brother Willie. As Herzog says to Asphalter: "The real and essential question is one of our employment by other human beings and their employment by us. Without this true employment you never dread death, you cultivate it. And consciousness when it doesn't understand what to live for, what to die for, can only abuse and ridicule itself" (272-73). Herzog shares with his daughter June a line from Blake's "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" that he repeatedly quotes and alludes to: "The busy bee has no time for sorrow" (276). The faculties regarded as soft and without value -- emotions, consciousness -- must be kept busy: *"in the interest of health, our benevolence and love demands exercise, the creature being emotional, passionate, expressive, a relating animal" ; "A good man can bear to listen to another talk about himself. You can't trust people who get bored by such talk" ; "the human intellect is one of the great forces of the universe. It can't safely remain unused"* (265, 321). From Ramona and Willie, Herzog receives more sympathetic support than he gives, and Ramona is willing to listen and work through his problems with him. Thereby they get a chance to exercise their muscle of benevolence and love. But Herzog also flexes his emotional and benevolent muscle when he shares what he has to give with his children and encourages Asphalter because he is in need of support.

The testing of the hero's *Bildung* demonstrates that he has broken away from other-directed, future oriented thought which is severed from the existential reality of the self and destructive of its relations to an other. The conclusion underscores Bellow's placement of emphasis in the narrative; the importance of totality of being through busy employment of all human faculties, the importance of self-reliance and acceptance of the present. Herzog's professional employment is not of signal importance; whether or not he will accept the offer of a job working on "history" for "Stone's Encyclopedia" (268). And even if Herzog does no conventional work during the summer of his narrative he is fully justified in writing to Ramona: *"It's turning into a busy summer"* (314). Herzog's returns for his "business" are a greater depth of being and a stronger sense of himself as well as others, making him a stronger individual, rather than a stronger competitor, better equipped to handle the "bitter cup" when it "come[s] round again, by and by" and better equipped to show consideration for others (326).

At the end of the novel Herzog picks "flowers for the table" in preparation for a dinner that he intends to cook for Ramona so that she will not have to cook "on a holiday" and realizes: "He was being thoughtful, being lovable. How would it be interpreted? (He smiled slightly.) Still, he need only know his own mind, and the flowers couldn't be used; no, they couldn't be turned against him" (340, 337, 341). Herzog's conscious choice to pay greater heed to the dictates of softer humanist impulses than the politics of a situation amptly demonstrates that he has broken the pattern of considering personal interaction in terms of power battles. This is Herzog's declaration of independence in effect: "he need only know his own mind" and his former bartering system of *"quid pro quo,"* of "meekness in exchange for preferential treatment" in the future, is cancelled (220, 154). When the novel ends Herzog is "done with these letters," the "spell" is broken and his sanity is no longer threatened by his compulsion to send out "messages" of one-upmanship with revered public figures and thinkers or calling for help like the *"Russian Cosmonauts"* lost in alien space: *"'SOS -- world SOS'"* (11, 341). In the last lines of the novel Herzog passes his final test. About to tell Mrs. Tuttle to "'[d]amp it down,'" Herzog checks himself: "But not just yet. At this time he had no messages for anyone. Nothing. Not a single word" (341). As Bakhtin points out, speech is by nature other-directed and future oriented by its anticipation of an answer. Herzog simply accepts the present; himself as he is in the present moment.

The pertinence of Bellow's criticism of the nature of dominant values is amply proved by critical comments that he either fails to test the values Herzog rediscovers during his crisis or parodies the testing of *Bildung*. The criteria such comments bring to the novel are grounded in social realism and its privileging of the thesis novel; they assume that the final test of Herzog's growth must occur within a public context, through action, as a testing of yet another pat solution. Bellow certainly modifies conventional use of *Bildung* and adapts it to his own thematic needs in rejection of the conventional understanding that mental work, mental activity, is of less significance than social action: Herzog's self-reliance and wholeness of being are the primary values for which no public function or "Great Expectations" can compensate. Herzog's apparent intention to abandon his academic study is in full accordance with the central thrust of the novel as Gabriel Josipovici points out in "Bellow and Herzog":

> Were he to write the book he would himself be guilty of just the thing that he condemns in others: he would be setting up a model, albeit a highly sophisticated one, and saying: *this* is what man is like, this is what history *is*, this, ultimately is what man *is*.... [I]ntellectual history, no matter how subtle, must always leave out more than it puts in. No volume in the history of ideas can do justice to Herzog's insight into the infinite regress of human self-awareness. (54)

Josipovici notes Bellow's underlying argument in *Herzog* that literature is better equipped for defining human nature than the various analytical theories:

> If, as soon as I say: "This is what I am", a part of me immediately dissociates itself from the definition, then what is required is a form that will convey the living person behind every speech and every gesture. What is required, in other words, is not history, but fiction, for only fiction can present the speaker as well as the words he speaks, can register the

> afterthought as well as the thought, and the afterthought to the afterthought, and the unspoken commentary on that. (54)

Josipovici's article is particularly insightful; his placing of Bellow within American thought rings true and his description of literary depiction of man is a succinct statement of a complex process. But I find his assumption that the insight Herzog gains during the narrative renders him dysfunctional as a historian somewhat unfounded (unless it remains a fact that history can be approached exclusively by rational means), even if I agree that Herzog's book as he originally envisioned it could not be written by the Herzog who has emerged by the end of his narrative.

Although the supremacy of literary discourse as particularly suited to divining human nature and ordering its chaotic existence is most certainly central to *Herzog*, Bellow does not suggest that the literary author has exclusive insight into human existence. The subtlety of Bellow's argument goes well beyond blunt affirmation of such hierarchization. In his treatment of the schismatic rational thought cultivated by contemporary intellectuals, Bellow seems in agreement with Julien Brenda's essay in 1927 on "la trahison des clercs" which Tsvetan Todorov touches upon in "The Modern Gadfly" in *The Partisan Review*. Todorov, agreeing with Brenda, finds that "[t]his betrayal consisted in the intellectual's engagement with different sorts of ideology" from early in this century with "Sartre [a]s an obvious example," lasting until in the late sixties; Todorov stresses that intellectuals betrayed "the democratic and humanitarian principles inherited from the French Revolution" (51). Bellow implies in *Herzog* that contemporary intellectuals negate the foundation of their own country, of their own class, of their fellow human beings, of the present, of reason, of humanity in general -- their own there included; not specifically by pursuing political ideologies but by cultivating thought that claims in the name of objectivity, of abstract rational constructs, full and absolute understanding of human reality. Bellow demonstrates through Herzog that there are more promising alternatives available to intellectuals. Only when Herzog avails himself of all of his human faculties does he work his way out of the troubles into which purely abstract rational constructions get him; his use of creative reason where instinct, emotion, imagination unite with "wisdom, experience, history." Significantly *Herzog* is not the *Künstlerroman* variation upon the *Bildungsroman* which would indeed suggest that only the artist can come to an understanding of human nature by creative means. But there is the suggestion in Herzog's constant interest in poetry and the way lines of poetry and situations from a variety of literary works are a part of his vocabulary of thought that he has kept alive his sensibilities through literature. And although Herzog is at the outset in many ways the embodiment of the value system that Bellow questions, its supports have been shaken giving the highly volatile and imaginative non-rational side of him a chance to assert itself.

Although an impressive number of conventional means recast in order to depict contemporary character have already emerged in my analysis so far, these are only the basic character constructs used by Bellow in *Herzog*. In the chapters that follow I will discuss other variants of character in relation to Bellow's development of the grotesque through the center of his protagonist's imagination and use of language, and his structuring of his narrative.

Chapter 6

"TRUE THINGS IN GROTESQUE FORMS."

In his development of the grotesque Bellow heavily stresses the futility of simply inverting the ideological paradigm he opposes or of attempting a synthesis of the values he speaks for and those he speaks against; the paradigm must be dismantled instead of being allowed to control the new terms. Bellow's main argument is with rationalism which he shows as the controlling force in contemporary thought, detrimental to human values, to cultural values, and to literature as one of their strongholds. Bellow traces this trend in contemporary thought back to *"Francis Bacon"* as marking the shift from *"the ancient days"* when *"the genius of man went largely into metaphors. But now into facts"* (258). With his 'new philosophy' Bacon set the foundation for scientific thought. He rejected metaphysics and was distrustful of the imagination, and verbal or textual flourishes. Bellow traces in particular back to Thomas Hobbes, Bacon's disciple, the implications that rationalism was to have for ideas about human life and literature. Hobbes insisted in *Leviathan* that unless man were controlled by a strong political leader, anarchy would reign and man's life would be "nasty, brutish and short." In his theories of language Hobbes defined the imagination as "the decay of sense." Judging by Bellow's emphasis on character, on **Herzog**'s heart, it seems that he found the culmination of the nihilism effected by rationalist thought in Alain Robbe-Grillet's formulations for a new novel, *nouveau roman*.

Robbe-Grillet says in 1956 in an article printed in English translation as "A Future for the Novel" that "three hundred years" of exploring "the human 'heart,'" exploring the 'depth' of character, has given the impression that all secrets of Nature have been excavated, all mysteries discovered:

> And the sacred vertigo the reader suffered then, far from causing him anguish and nausea, reassured him as to his power of domination over the

> world.... Thus the word functioned as a trap in which the writer captured the universe in order to hand it over to society.... While essentialist conceptions of man met their destruction, the notion of 'condition' henceforth replacing that of 'nature,' the *surface* of things has ceased to be for us the mask of their heart, a sentiment that led to every kind of metaphysical transcendence. (467, 471, 472)

Robbe-Grillet asserts "the art of the novel is dying" from the stagnation of continued engagement with character and the heart, and needs to capture the "violence" with which film "can drag us out of our interior comfort" to confront "the noisy pack of our animistic or protective adjectives" if it is to survive at all (469, 468). Bellow made clear in his "Nobel Lecture" that he did not agree with Robbe-Grillet that the best solution was to leave out the "mystery" of human heart. He said in the lecture that a novelist can "drop character if the strategy stimulates him" but insisted that the choice should be based on individual and creative preference rather than compliance to theoretical dictates; novelists must maintain their independence (10). In *Herzog* Bellow depicts the animistic drives as they relate to the surface and plays them against the depth of character. He exposes rationalism as an extreme extortion of human reality -- a negation of all life-giving human attributes -- and firmly stresses its distortion in the various characters. Yet the characters Bellow most uncompromisingly associates with the grotesque distortion of rationalism emerge as credible indications of human potential.

Bellow employs the very etymological strategy Heidegger uses to construct his theory of being and nothingness to dismantle its premises and indeed the schismatic premises established by rationalism; he 'names' the 'divinities,' as Heidegger found appropriate for literature, and he releases the various denotations and connotations of words that were key terms in philosophy and literature at the time and sets them at play against the denotations and connotations of their basic parts.[1] The divinities Bellow names through all kinds of ironic twists are the cultural divinities. The refrain of Herzog's heart names Robbe-Grillet who found the heart of a tomato more fascinating in *The Erasers* than the human heart and Bellow's naming continues for instance in Herzog's jealousy and his act of voyeurism by referring to the title of two of Robbe-Grillet's novels. Bellow names Nietzsche for instance in Herzog's ponderings upon poison in the opening and in his worries about his mental and physical health, in particular about having contracted a venereal disease. Nietzsche described the "the last man" as conformist and hedonist, seeking religion only to get his regular doses of poison, eventually getting the last blissful dose before his death and Nietzsche's severe physical and mental decline which led him to death are thought to have been caused by syphilis. Herzog repeatedly refers to Leviathan but Bellow also names Hobbes through Himmelstein. Himmelstein not only upholds but literally lends physical shape to Hobbes' grotesque vision of man's life as "nasty, brutish and short." Sartre and existentialism in general are named by Herzog's nausea and more ironically by Shapiro's nausea from greed and overindulgence. These examples suffice to indicate Bellow's game of naming or name-calling the cultural divinities he opposes.

But Bellow also puts the opposition in its place, in a double sense. He does not demolish the errors any more than does Herzog; he takes each error and shows it as a typical grotesque truth -- a part taken for the whole -- and places it within a broader context. Bellow dismantles the oppositional dialectic between 'subject'/ 'object,' 'abstract'/ 'concrete,' 'construct'/ 'dismantle,' 'imagination'/ 'reason' and shows them as naturally interrelated, interdependent. He shows first of all that rationalism severs the natural connections between the binary pairs; secondly that it strips them of their organic and human realities, leaving only technical and mechanical significations; thirdly it privileges one part of each binary pair: 'object,' 'concrete,' 'dismantle,' 'reason.' Bellow demonstrates that 'subject,' 'object,' 'abstract,' 'concrete,' 'construction,' 'dismantling,' 'imagination,' 'reason' can be variously deconstructed to reestablish a hierarchy of values but rationalism cannot because in itself it carries no opposition, only dismantling capacities, requiring its negative -- the aspects it cancels -- for its reconstruction. Despite having clear points of cultural reference outside the constructed world of the novel, the issues Bellow develops through the key terms are also immediately relevant to the action itself as it emerges filtered through the consciousness and imagination of Herzog.

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[1] It is worth noting that Jacques Derrida's "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," first delivered as a lecture at Johns Hopkins University in 1966, succeeds *Herzog* by two years. Derrida also draws upon Heidegger's for his basis of deconstruction.

Constructive Abstracting Appetites

Herzog discovers that whereas truth takes flight when pursued solely by rational means in the abstract, glimpses of it may visit unexpectedly in images, by the means of creative metaphoric thought which makes abstract reasoning concrete. Attempting to come to terms with the inconsistencies in human nature, Herzog envisions a concrete, complex and open grotesque image of the basic drives that propel man through life. In a letter to Dr. Schrodinger, Herzog reflects upon Schrodinger's observation *"that in all of nature only man hesitates to cause pain"* yet *"destruction is the master-method by which evolution produces new types"* -- by which *"the organism maintains itself against death"* (177-78). Herzog continues:

> *But reluctance to cause pain coupled with the necessity to devour … a peculiar human trick is the result, which consists in admitting and denying evils at the same time. To have a human life, and also an inhuman life. In fact, to have everything, to combine all elements with immense ingenuity and greed. To bite, to swallow. At the same time to pity your food. To have sentiment. At the same time to behave brutally. It has been suggested (and why not!) that reluctance to cause pain is actually an extreme form, a delicious form of sensuality, and that we increase the luxuries of pain by the*

> *injection of a moral pathos. Thus working both sides of the street. Nevertheless, there are moral realities ….* (178)

Bellow draws upon this image for *leitmotifs* in his development of the grotesque through relation to character, action, and image to indicate the actual interconnectedness of elements perceived by rationalism in oppositional terms. The image captures the instincts embedded in man's mixed nature -- a complex mixture of animistic and sublime drives -- as well as of the paradox in nature itself that survival as well as advancement and reconstruction require dismantling, destruction. The maintenance and construction of the organism by destruction requires abstraction in a double sense: 'drawing the essence from' and 'withdrawing from.' And the maneuvers that man tends to rely on to enjoy these opposed instincts and lend them an exalted countenance Herzog sees as akin to those of the streetwalker, the whore "working both sides of the street."

Bellow stresses that all systems are dependent upon abstraction, in the sense of 'drawing the essence from' or 'devouring,' for their sustenance and reconstruction. References to characters' teeth, notably detailed and frequent, contribute to the visual image of their appearance and indicate character. But above all these references function as outlined in Herzog's image above, to indicate the organic drive towards growth, advancement whereby "the organism maintains itself against death" by regeneration of the flesh; death is made life, life made death through devouring, and the sensuality of instilling pain feeds into pleasure. Jonah Herzog sees death as a **birth** into death. The vision of human life that emerges in the deep structure of *Herzog* through scenes, situations, characters, and images is of an intricate organism wherein every appetite must be fed and exercised for its growth and health; be it the appetites of intellect, imagination, emotion, body, spirit; the appetite for personal and social significance -- for leaving behind something worthwhile once one's organism has run its natural course. Throughout the narrative of *Herzog* Bellow emphasizes that each of these human appetites which feed into all human systems, all human constructs, have their potential for destructiveness by mismanagement, as well as constructiveness, and that the balance can easily tilt in a direction opposite to intention.

Bellow indicates that the maintenance and growth of the organism must be controlled so that no one appetite is overfed at the expense of another and preservation must be in balance with consumption. Uncontrolled the organism may either deteriorate or run into decay by becoming "overgrown" like Herzog's garden in the opening and his mind as it has amassed information without sorting out the essentials. Insufficient devouring causes decay. Nachman lives by preservation and he rejects consumption. His neglect of his physical essence leads to entropy, decay, as his missing teeth indicate. Tante Taube's preservation of her energies by doing everything slowly wards off death but makes her "a cold forge," as Jonah Herzog complains: *"A kalte kuzhnya, Moshe. Kein fire"* (248). Herzog and Madeleine's agreement to cut out "sentimental crap" in their marriage results in Herzog's sexual impotence or "ejaculatio praecox" and Madeleine's hatred of him (116, 40). Herzog's efforts to make "a quick understanding slow" results in others outwitting him, leaving him with *"Trepverter," "esprit de l'escalier."* June's "tiny white" "milk teeth" compared to the teeth of the little boy killed by his mother, as described in the medical report, crystallizes all that sets them apart: "The child ... was normally formed but seemed to have suffered from malnutrition. There were signs of incipient rickets, the teeth were already quite carious, but this was sometimes a symptom that the mother had had toxemia in pregnancy" (257, 277, 237). Natural death waits for ripeness. Herzog finds "significance" in the "small bloodless marks on [Phoebe's] face" which are: "As if death had tried her with his teeth and found her still unripe" (264). When an organism is denied ripeness, the Great Devourer is given an undue advantage.

Excessive spending of energy also has its consequences. Herzog worries that his father's outburst of rage when he threatened to kill Herzog took some years off his life. Herzog's impression of Himmelstein's bursts of anger, either to bully others into yielding to his will, or because he is more deeply affected than he lets on by the dark aspect of reality he mostly encounters in his work as a lawyer, is: "The lava of that heart may have pushed those ribs out of shape, and the force of that hellish tongue made his teeth protrude" (86). And excessive spending of energy calls for excessive consumption. Shapiro feeds his intellect by attacking everyone and "Herzog remembered him as a greedy eater" (73). One reason Herzog mentions why Madeleine wanted out of their marriage is: "... I resembled her father in too many ways. That when we were in a room together *I* seemed to swallow and gulp up all the air and left nothing for her to breathe" (191). Gersbach, with his flaming hair and inexhaustible energy, consumes all the emotions about him and his wife's "only complaint was that he was so horny" (216). The consuming energy of the human abstract or essence must find an outlet: in Jonah Herzog it goes into the drama of his life, the sensuality that Daisy's mother Polina suppresses goes into her baking. If harnessed too tightly by experience and culture, "explosions [ ] become implosions, and where light once was darkness [comes], bit by bit" (328). Man may feed upon himself, as Nachman does; Simkin points out to Herzog: "exaggeration is bad for you. You eat yourself alive" (217).

Bellow indicates that management of man's powerful essence is of primary importance but he draws a line between extreme control that prevents growth in some areas and cultivation which encourages natural growth but sorts out the weeds. The way Gersbach's hair is always "brutally barbered" at "the back" and Madeleine cuts her bangs every morning "as if discharging a gun," ties in with the way they resist historical continuity of self and thereby its growth, self-construction (111, 60). The past must be allowed to **feed into** the present without **feeding upon** the present as it does when past ideas are preserved in their external form without taking into account their underlying significance -- be it the ideas of Nietzsche or other thinkers to whom contemporary man looks for definitions of his existence. In Sono Oguki's "parlor of Oriental luxury," Herzog makes "a principled quest -- *principled*, mind you -- for life-giving pleasure, solving for Moses E. Herzog the puzzle of the body (curing himself of the fatal disorder of worldliness which rejects worldly happiness, this Western plague, this mental leprosy)" (169-70). Cultivation of sensuality, although immensely important, Herzog discovers, is not enough if other aspects of life get left out as they inescapably must with Sono because of language difficulties. With Ramona he finds cultivation of the senses in the broadest meaning of the word: sensuousness, sense and sensibility, sensing by instinct, and sensitivity. Significantly the three characters who most clearly live by the value of cultivation, Sono, Ramona, Sarah Herzog, are foreigners in American society; Ramona does not find Herzog "'a true, puritanical American'" because of his "'talent for sensuality'" (159).

Sono, Ramona, and Sarah Herzog are in particular associated with earth, imagination and alertness to the mystery of human life and nature. Ramona and Herzog's mother also have the double view of humorous acceptance of issues not conventionally associated with laughter; Ramona laughs with Herzog at their fanciful sexual role-playing, Herzog's mother, on the other hand, accepts death with this double view which combines imagination and reason. Herzog recalls his mother's demonstration that "Adam was created from the dust of the ground"; "Maybe she offered me this proof partly in a spirit of comedy. The wit you can have only when you consider death very plainly, when you consider what a human being really is" (232, 233). But Herzog's mother and Sono belong to his past, Ramona to his present. Bellow's references to Ramona's teeth are particularly detailed and indicative of her healthy appetite for life. Ramona has "excellent white teeth," "marvelous, slightly curved white teeth. Her lips would part and close over these significant teeth" (16, 158). Anticipating his visit to Ramona, Herzog thinks: "Ramona will feed you, give you wine, remove your shoes, flatter you, smooth down your hackles, kiss you, pinch your lip with her teeth" (159). Once he gets there, Ramona is: "Engagingly affectionate; her fine large teeth, tender dark eyes, enriched by black lines, smiled upon him" (183). And when her resources are depleted, "when she [i]s tired, upset, and weak, [ ] the shadows c[o]me over her eyes, [ ] the fit of her skirt [i]s wrong and she ha[s] cold hands, cold lips parted on her teeth" (197).

Cultivation of life is Ramona's essence; a florist, she surrounds herself with flowers and not only accepts but delights in earthy reality; exquisite wine, food, and eroticism. "Miss Harmona" as Tuttle calls her, although a humanly flawed character, is also the embodiment of cultured and cultivated harmony among the appetites. Ramona's values are clearly not the norm in the world Herzog lives in, but a desirable alternative. Bellow demonstrates in *Herzog* that when cultural values have taken a turn that proves hazardous to the individual, directly causing death and decay in life as well as untimely death, not only is a highly valuable resource being wasted, but wasted unnecessarily by the very thing that should sustain each individual's life.[2]

Subjective Abstracting Constructs

If the main significance in Bellow's key terms when relating to the process of life and death has to do with the interaction between the devouring subject, the devoured object, and the concrete as body and the senses, construction as growth, dismantling as the prerequisite for regeneration, imagination and reason as the means to maintain harmony within the complex system of appetites, the terms take on a totally different meaning when referring to ideology. The abstract takes on the denotations of 'pulling away from,' 'appropriating,' 'devaluating' and the *leitmotif* terms serve to highlight the discrepancy between the perceived and the actual and to lay bare the motivation and maneuvers that hide beneath the different abstract rational constructs by which the individual orders and controls his existence. Despite vastly different personalities and different ideological constructs, the characters' motivation is strikingly similar and the dislocation of meaning is most striking when rational and objective constructs, seemingly based on concrete evidence of modern man's decline, turn out to be inversions of actuality.

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[2] It is worth remembering that the movement for peace, love, flower-power, happiness, rejection of materialism and return to nature first saw light in San Francisco in 1966-67 and continued into the seventies, even if it was announced dead by its ideological "originators" with a "'Death of Hippie' parade in San Francisco in 1968," according to *The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, eds. Alan Bullock and Oliver Stallybrass (1977; London: Fontana Paperbacks, 1986) 284. The hippie movement obviously shared Bellow's concerns, although not his solution of restoring balance rather than going to the opposite extremes, many of which Bellow anticipates in *Herzog*, no doubt by keeping an eye on the Beats and the Radicals at the time, who prepared the ground for what was to follow.

Through the historian Egbert Shapiro and the lawyer Sandor Himmelstein, Bellow establishes a basic opposition. In self-presentation as well as in speech Shapiro and Himmelstein are diametric opposites. A cultivated intellectual, Shapiro speaks in long "Germanic" sentences "filled with incredible bombast" and pretentiousness: "'On balance, I should not venture to assay the merit of the tendency without more mature consideration. ... How delightful!'" (70). Himmelstein, who sees himself as one of "the folks -- with good hearts," cultivates a streetwise image and vulgar speech: "'Spendthrift bitches!' he shouted at the women of his house. 'Frigging lice! All they're good for is to wag their asses at the dress shops and play gidgy in the bushes'" (88-89). But Shapiro and Himmelstein are alike in being self-made, in having fought their way to a secure and rather affluent position in the middle class. Yet neither of them wants to be identified as belonging to that class. They also share the view that modern man is debased -- either fallen from former greatness or base by nature -- a view that coexists with their desire to rise above low origins.

Sustained 'distance from material manifestation' is to be found in Shapiro's abstract construct of reality. Shapiro is a spokesman for the historical vision of decline, exhaustion of *"all traditions"* and *"moral feeling"* (74). Herzog rejects as *"utopian fiction"* Shapiro's understanding that decline is the prevalent characteristic of modern history, analogous to *"the decline and fall of the classical world"*; Herzog points out that only the aristocracy can claim historical decline, a Heideggerian *"fall into the quotidian"* (75-76, 49). *"The old empires are shattered but those same one-time powers are richer than ever,"* says Herzog, and the history of democracy, which is essentially the history of the emergence of the middle class, is that of a rise *"to inherit the aristocratic dignity of the old regime,"* a rise *"[r]eaching at last the point of denying the humanity of the industrialized, 'banalized'* *masses,"* a rise causing *"confusion between aesthetic and moral judgements"* in *"the sphere of culture"* (76).

"A merely aesthetic critique of modern history!" -- an abstract aesthetic construct which ignores *"the wars and mass killings,"* which "forget[s] history" -- is what Shapiro offers, says Herzog (75). Shapiro's own personal history is at odds with his historical construct. Shapiro, with his working class background but aristocratic airs, with his "snarling teeth, his salivating greed, the dagger of an ulcer in his belly," his intellectual flirtation with Madeleine, is the embodiment of the *"[e]mergent plebeian classes"* who *"fought for food, power, sexual privileges"* and *"aristocratic dignity"* (77, 76). The ulcer gnawing at Shapiro's innards *"give[s] him true insights, too,"* says Herzog, but Shapiro prefers not to acknowledge his ulcer, "the psychosomatic implications" that attest to his own struggle to claim the role of *"'The American Gentleman,'"* just as he prefers not to acknowledge the implications of class struggles (77, 73, 76). Shapiro's historical construct is abstracted, in the sense of 'appropriated,' from the history of aristocracy, not democracy. And it abstracts from, in the sense of 'devalues,' the sacrifices that struggles for power have cost man -- Shapiro himself there amongst, as the pain in his belly, his nausea, cautions.

The ruthlessness with which Gersbach and Madeleine treat Herzog is the essence of reality, according to Sandor Himmelstein, because in reality "[f]acts are nasty" and "[w]e're all whores in this world" (86, 85). The only value that Himmelstein will acknowledge is that of pain, suffering; his own above all, being a "dwarf and hunchback . . . disabled by a mine" during the war, but Gersbach's as well for being an "effing peg-leg" due to having lost one leg as a child (79, 84). Himmelstein sees himself as doing Herzog a favour by teaching him lessons of "the real," by "cutting the dead weight of deception from Herzog's soul" (84). Himmelstein's lessons abstract value from Herzog, 'devaluate' his being; Himmelstein dismisses the significance of Herzog's life, his "effing death," with the same ease as he does Herzog's sanity (87). And money that Herzog left for June when he went to Europe, *"for emergency,"* Himmelstein gives *"to Madeleine to buy clothes"* (91). Himmelstein's dog, scuttling away in "fear" from its master's fits of rage, knows that reality is nasty (88).

Himmelstein's insistence upon the real suggests an oppositional relation to Shapiro's preference for the abstract. But in Himmelstein's construct of reality there is the same dissociation from his actual existence as in Shapiro's. Himmelstein works as a lawyer but acts like a gangster. He is educated and lives in middle class comfort with a gentle wife who caters to him in every way. Yet he appropriates the reality that belongs to people like the two blacks Herzog sees in court, whose reality is really nasty because they find themselves at the bottom of the social ladder, poor, uneducated, and without options; where all may have to be "whores" because survival, sustenance, overrules moral scruples by necessity and the "criminal" with his "trembling" legs ready for flight is as much a victim as the man he lures into a cellar on the promise of "a drink," only to batter and rob him of his "'sixty-eight cents'" (225-26). Despite his professed view that university education is "a laugh!" and produces "effing eggheads," Himmelstein wants Herzog to "take an interest in [his daughter Carmel's] mental development, talk to her about "[b]ooks -- ideas" because he fears "the boys are getting into her pants already" (88-89). The literal reality of a whore does not appeal to Himmelstein when it concerns his offspring, nor does the idea of his own death when he appeals to Herzog for sympathy on the grounds that his family "is killing" him with work, expenses, and dirty dishes (89).

Reality as Himmelstein presents it, history as Shapiro presents it, these are abstracted in a double sense: they are 'dissociated' from reality but they are also the 'essence' of Himmelstein's and Shapiro's respective self presentations which insist on values they deny, but appropriate from, others. Shapiro's cultured pseudo-aristocratic outlook is representative for the intellectual or "the delirious professions, *as Valéry calls them -- trades in which the main instrument is your opinion of yourself and the raw* *material is your reputation or standing"* (77). Himmelstein's "tough" outlook "is his personal, brutal version of the popular outlook, the American way of life" (291).

Herzog adopts both approaches to life at different times. Herzog's history runs parallel to Shapiro's in the sense that it is "a short history of social climbing" (76). As a young man Herzog cultivates "The elite look" and during his marriage to Madeleine, Herzog becomes *"'The American Gentleman,' . . . Squire Herzog. The Graf Pototsky of the Berkshires"* (249, 76). Yet Herzog had set out to resist *"the argument that scientific thought has put into disorder all considerations based on value..., that the realm of facts and that of values are not eternally separated,"* and to rescue *"the quotidian or ordinary"* by turning his own life into *"an important experiment"* that would prove his point (106). His greatest disappointment with his divorce turns out to be that his "own actions" that were to have *"historic importance"* were thwarted by people who *"were interfering with"* his *"important experiment"*; "The progress of civilization -- indeed, the survival of civilization -- depended on the successes of Moses E. Herzog. And in treating him as she did, Madeleine injured a great project. This was, in the eyes of Moses E. Herzog, what was so grotesque and deplorable about the experience of Moses E. Herzog" (106, 125). In practice, Herzog's abstract concept of the ordinary is a grotesque extension of "marvellous" Herzog, in the reductive Andersonian sense of the grotesque character, just like Shapiro's abstract concept of history, is an extension of the aristocratic grotesque Shapiro has made of himself.

After Herzog's divorce the pain and indignities he suffered become the center of his existence and once he encounters the reality Himmelstein faces in the courtroom every day, Herzog is also struck with the rage that frequently erupts in Himmelstein and he adopts Himmelstein's view that brutal treatment of others is justifiable. In so doing, he adopts Hobbes' grotesque vision of man's life as "nasty, brutish and short," unless controlled by a strong ruler. Herzog convinces himself that because Madeleine and Gersbach are nasty and brutish, he is fully rational, fully justified in being brutish and making their life short:

> It's not everyone who gets the opportunity to kill with a clear conscience. They had opened the way to justifiable murder. They deserved to die. He had a right to kill them. They would even know why they were dying; no explanation necessary.... Gersbach would only hang his head, with tears for himself.... Madeleine would shriek and curse. Out of hatred, the most powerful element in her life, stronger by far than any other power or motive. (254-5)

The abstract and reality collide when Herzog actually sees Madeleine and Gersbach when spying through the windows. Even if in a way on borrowed terms, they are living out the ordinary that escaped him when he pursued it in the abstract. The reality of Madeleine peacefully washing the dishes, Gersbach washing June with stern tenderness, mocks the visions of orgiastic debauchery Herzog had conjured up while plotting revenge and justice by legal means with Simkin. And the idea of justifiable death becomes a mockery of reality, "an absurd thought," *"theatre,"* "ludicrous" (258).

Presuming personally to embody and know the 'essence' of man's history, reality, or ordinary existence; assuming the power to control the experience of another; presuming the authority to pass judgement on the value of the life of another or mankind, no less, and sentence an other to death; Shapiro, Himmelstein, and Herzog, before he sees the light, are representative for real-life theorists and characters in *Herzog* who assume Godlike power. Herzog's description of Gersbach as "the moral megalomaniac and prophet in Israel" also applies to them (152). Absolute authority, absolute knowledge, is divine, as Herzog recognizes: "A man may say, 'From now on I'm going to speak the truth.' But the truth hears him and runs away and hides before he's even done speaking. There is something funny about the human condition, and civilized intelligence makes fun of its own ideas" (271).

The “Garment” of Appearances

Bellow demonstrates in *Herzog* that man’s impulse to do something constructive for others and for himself is deep-seated but easily led astray. The cultural situation that Herzog finds himself in is that the regenerative aspects have been cancelled from the spiritual and organic realms, and are predominantly pursued in the realms of technology and other man-made constructs produced by mechanical rational thought. Bellow lays bare the inversion that occurs in the pursuit of “life, liberty” and “happiness” when the constructive life-enhancing values are removed from the life of the spirit and the “strange organization” of the body (340). Body, soul, spirit are only accepted under erasure, in a negative state of pain, bondage and dissolution. He employs the motif of the ‘saviour’ to indicate the abstract ideal, the characters’ benevolent and constructive aspirations to save another person rather than offer a divine solution for the whole world. The meaning and the connotations of the motif of the ‘whore,’ on the other hand, shift around. Predominantly the ‘whore’ relates to the world of matter and self-advancement, as well as to the inversion of the ideal when carried out in actuality, when transcendent values are inverted and pursued through matter, and destructiveness is given the aspect of benevolence. Bellow clearly differentiates between inherently destructive and unethical actions grounded in self-serving choice, rationalized and glorified, and destructive and unethical actions where freedom of choice has been cancelled by circumstances beyond the individual’s control. He exposes through imagery the tilting of this precarious balance towards death and pain as distortion of human life and value as “decay of sense” in the broadest application of the word ‘sense.’

Bellow makes concrete the various ‘abstract rational constructs’ through characters who function as oppositional and parallel pairs for dialogic development where each variation throws light upon another. Bellow shows through Herzog’s childhood friend Nachman the poet, that simple and partial inversion of the extremes in the contemporary value system is not a viable alternative. Nachman's vision of the self runs counter to the assumption that self is a disposable or absent entity. He says to Herzog:

> "[ ] I have had visions of judgement. I see mainly the obstinacy of cripples. We do not love ourselves, but persist in stubbornness. Each man is stubbornly, stubbornly himself. Above all himself, to the end of time. Each of these creatures has some secret quality, and for this quality he is prepared to do anything. He will turn the universe upside down, but he will not deliver this quality to anyone else. Sooner let the world turn to drifting powder. This is what my poems are about" (134).

Nachman's 'truth' about essential individual value leaves out the possibility of individual growth as well as the element of cultural influence which shapes the essence of the individual. His cancellation of growth is in accordance with his spiritual emphasis as well as his acceptance of the vision of modern decline:

> "Perhaps ... people wish life to end. They have polluted it. Courage, honor, frankness, friendship, duty, all made filthy. Sullied. So that we loathe the daily bread that prolongs useless existence. There was a time when men were born, lived, died. But do you call these men? We are only creatures. Death himself must be tired of us. I can see Death coming before God to say 'What shall I do? There is no grandeur in being Death. Release me God from this meanness.'" (133)

In accepting the premise of absolute decline, Nachman manifests the cultural influence he fails to take into consideration in his attempts to abstract himself from materialistic decadence.

Cultural conditioning is further manifested in Nachman's deemphasis of the body which is an extension of his rejection of the decadence he associates with excessive materialism. Nachman uncompromisingly rejects "'bourgeois America'" as "'a crude world of finery and excrement. A proud, lazy civilization that worships its own boorishness'"; "'But I will never worship the fat gods. Not I. I'm no Marxist, you know. I keep my heart with William Blake and Rilke'" (133). But Nachman's dismissal of rationalism in favour of mysticism, dismissal of matter and materialism in pursuit of pure spirituality, because inversions of extremes into their opposite extremes, take him into irrationality and physical decay. He neglects the body, the *"Beged,"* the "garment," that clothes and shelters the spirit (131). Herzog describes him *"in Paris after the War,"* as "[w]rinkled and dirty," in "gutter-stained pants," "his creased face the face of a dying man": "His fingers had grown knobby -- rheumatic. His face was coarse -- slack from illness, suffering, and absurdity" (130). And later in New York, "gaunt, furrowed Nachman," "cheeks" "sunken," "yellow" "[u]nder the eyes," "had lost teeth, and his jaw was smaller, his grey cheeks were bristly"; "this gaunt apparition of crazy lecturing Nachman" seemed less "real" to Herzog than Nachman "at six ... with his fresh face, the smiling gap in his front teeth" (133). These two images of Nachman with his front teeth missing for different reasons appropriately indicate Innocence and Experience, Heaven and Hell, calling attention to Nachman's partial adoption of Blake's vision, his pursuit of spiritual innocence leaving out the inescapability of experience.

Nachman wanted to save his "'wife,'" his "'little Laura,'" from the bourgeois materialism of her family who wanted her to marry "'a husband with money,'" according to him, because "[a]t the edge of doom, beside the last grave of mankind, they will still be counting their paper. Praying over their balance sheets..." (132, 133). Nachman saw Herzog in Paris to ask him the loan of money to go after his wife to America to rescue her from her father who had "[s]pirited her away":

> Nachman and Laura had been wandering up and down Europe, sleeping in ditches in the Rimbaud country, reading Van Gogh's letters aloud to each other -- Rilke's poems. Laura was not too strong in the head, either. She was thin, soft-faced, the corners of her pale mouth turned down. She caught the flu in Belgium (130).

Herzog last sees her in "an insane asylum" with "bandaged wrists" from the "third suicide attempt" that he "knew of," "wanting to talk of French literature only," lost in the abstract as she traces "the shape of Valéry's images" (132). Herzog suspects she may be dead when Nachman avoids him in the street one day. Nachman's avoidance of Herzog may on the one hand indicate that he has acknowledged his part in Laura's fate, despite his avowals that her suicide attempts were caused solely by the "'persecution of her family" who "[i]mprisoned her. As if to love me proved she was mad" (132). On the other hand Nachman's flight from Herzog may indicate that he was unable to admit his own failure to "be strong enough to protect [their] love" (132). Nachman's version of Rilke's nomadic existence, sleeping in ditches and the gutter instead of enjoying the luxury of the palaces and castles of the aristocracy, as Rilke did, seems culturally conditioned. His asceticism appears on the one hand to be an extreme and spiritually oriented reaction to extreme materialism but on the other an extension of the tendency evident in Himmelstein and Gersbach, both presented as representing the "popular outlook, the American way of life," to regard suffering and pain as supreme and absolute values (291). Nachman's attempts to abstract himself from decay sends him into it so deep that he becomes its embodiment; his attempts to save Laura, "a pure soul that understands only pure things," the "child" who "can't live without" him and without whom he "can't live," end with her destruction whereas he lives in continued flight (130).

If Nachman is most uncompromisingly the 'saviour' who is not willing "to accept a mixed condition of life," Madeleine's father Pontritter is quite content to construct a rationale that allows him to simultaneously enjoy and dismiss all bourgeois privileges in the manner of the 'whore.' The construct of a bohemian, grounded in Marxism, serves him to transcend the "ordinary," the bourgeoisie, the middle class; "'mass society,'" "'money society,'" as his ex-wife Tennie scathingly puts it (108). Yet he reaps benefits in excess from the very class he denigrates, free from materialistic concerns and class struggles. On the one hand he rides upon the back of his ex-wife. Madeleine tells Herzog that when her parents were married her "mother had to live a bohemian life. She worked, while Pontritter carried on" and that she "still goes to that rotten acting school after hours and keeps his books" (114). On the other hand, Pontritter gets money by being a 'kept' man or by accepting money from the masses: "the old man needed fifty thousand a year, and … he got it, too, the old Svengali, out of women and stage-struck suckers" (108). Yet "'[h]e'll leave nothing but lawsuits and debts,'" says Madeleine (114). But Pontritter's bohemian freedom abstracts values of greater significance than money from his wife and daughter who pay for his privileges with their "life, liberty," and "happiness."

Tennie lives her life in sacrifice to Pontritter's acting career, allowing him to abstract the essence from her life. She sees herself as a saviour but is in fact a slave to an abstract idea. As Herzog sees her: "Thirty years the bohemian wife, the platitudes of that ideology threadbare, cynically exploited by old Pontritter, Tennie remained faithful, chained in the dull silver 'abstract' jewelry that she wore" (109). "'She's such a slave,'" says Madeleine about her mother and explains that although divorced, neither of her parents will "let go": "He's the great thing in her life -- another Stanislavsky. She sacrificed herself and if he's not a great genius what was it all for!" (114). Aware of the way her mother is implicated in her own bondage, Madeleine makes it clear to Herzog before they get married that she does not want to become "a slave," to "sacrifice[ ]" herself to a man like her mother did, and Tennie helps to 'save' Madeleine by appealing to Herzog's "weakness for good deeds" (114).

Despite Madeleine's determination to annihilate the past, the shackles of the shape that her formative years lend to her sense of reality are stronger than her indomitable will. Pontritter's indoctrination of his daughter apparently is to teach her the value of life without bourgeois illusions. Yet Pontritter himself is a master of illusion, by profession as an actor, as in life. In this, even if not in his placement of himself within the social hierarchy, Pontritter shares Himmelstein's vision of reality as limited to nasty facts, there included that everybody is a whore. The way Madeleine learns to read indicates one reason why her "childhood was a grotesque nightmare" (117). Pontritter teaches Madeleine her "ABC's" from "Lenin's *State and Revolution*" (116). He denies her the childish pleasure of tackling things within her capacity in a way that makes the process of learning a joy instead of a battle. And the text itself likely imprinted upon her consciousness the importance of class struggle, which she later pursues with the determination of rising to the top as an intellectual. The way Pontritter introduced death to Madeleine when she was "six or seven," by telling her that "we died and rotted in the grave," suggests another reason why her childhood was unhappy (117). Pontritter's rationalist resolution to avoid illusion lends an undue emphasis, bluntly and brutally stated, on life as simply the path to decay, likely to cause dread of death and to devalue life. In fact, Madeleine's explanation of her desire for religion and conventional life is: "now I'm willing to go on living, and to bring children into the world, provided I have something to tell them when they ask me about death and the grave" (117).

Madeleine takes after her father in having a flair for the dramatic staging of an event, in her capacity to put a spell on an audience, so the boundaries between inherited characteristics and formative impact are somewhat vague. But the glimpses of her youth indicate that she learnt to rely on the illusion of deception more than the 'illusion' of happiness and emotion; to rely on matter, the garments of reality, to sustain her; and, in reaction to lack of hierarchy of values during her childhood, to impose rules. Pontritter gave Madeleine lessons in deception and acceptance of money for services rendered by bribing her "with nickels when [she] saw him with one of his broads" (116). Another assault upon her capacity for innocence and trust was the family friend's sexual abuse of her at the age of thirteen and payment for keeping silent. Although stressing that the destructive impact upon Madeleine of being abused is aggravated by the fact that it is by someone she has learnt to trust rather than a total stranger, Bellow lends greater emphasis to the formative implications of the years preceding the abuse. Herzog describes a photograph of "Madeleine, aged twelve" which shows her with "desperate dark shadows under her eyes, premature signs of suffering and of craving for revenge" (126). Bellow underlines the difference between the formative background of Ramona and Madeleine with a photograph of Ramona "in a Tiffany frame -- seven years old, a wise child leaning on a bank of plush, her finger pressing on her temple," reflecting the preference "[a] generation ago" for "[p]rodigious wisdom in children" and "early sensuality" (183). Madeleine's reaction to her feeling of having been deprived as a child of the values that sustain the individual later in life is to abstract herself from her father; she "hates her father," wants to avoid "the ordinary loose way -- without rules," and feels that her "parents damn well destroyed" her with their bohemian ways (116, 117). Scenes from her and Herzog's early days before their marriage stress her attempts to disguise her youth and vulnerability, "her childish intensity, her fear, her religious will" under a mask of the "middle-aged woman"; to gain spiritual strength by an act of will from the costume and rituals of Catholicism (115). Through parallel incidents in Herzog's life, Bellow stresses the intricate connection between cultural values, experience, and freedom of choice.

Whereas Madeleine's freedom of choice and personal development are limited by narrow indoctrination reinforced by experience while growing up, Herzog seems relatively free to stake out his own territory even if he feels that his being a Jew puts obstacles in his way towards personal advancement. Despite their poverty and hardships, the Herzogs provide their children with cultural, spiritual, and emotional values that lie in store for Herzog when he most needs them. Sarah Herzog emphasizes that the magic of creation is the roots of life and death, instead of decay only, when she rubs her palm to bring out the earth from which Adam was created, and when she gestures to Herzog to show him *"My son, this is death"* upon her death-bed, she leaves it to him to "read this text" when he himself is ready for it (234). Herzog shows an early tendency towards retreat into abstraction. Abstraction serves him to shelter himself from the harsh reality of his mother's death by reading *The World as Will and Idea* and *The Decline of the West* instead of the "text" of his mother's decline (233, 234). Abstraction serves him to enjoy privileges without having to acknowledge them. He recalls "pretend[ing] not to understand" and not "get[ting] off the sled" when a woman asked his mother, "dark under the eyes" with fatigue, why she was pulling Herzog instead of making him walk: "One of life's hardest jobs, to make a quick understanding slow. I think I succeeded, thought Herzog" (139). Bellow suggests that Herzog's own experience of being sexually abused by a stranger contributed significantly to his strategy of abstracting himself from evil by never looking it in the face. Herzog's grown "heart began to pound" when he passed the lane where it occurred; he does not bring up this experience when Madeleine talks about hers; he associates this memory with the desire to "forget what you can't bear"; and immediately after the incident he acts as if "nothing happened. Nothing!" (289). But pretending nothing happened by not talking about it is also something Herzog learns from his father: "How did Papa feel when he found that Voplonsky was in cahoots with the hi-jackers? He never said" (190).

Herzog's abstraction is essentially a variation upon Madeleine's construction of appearances through costumes; an intricate human strategy that serves to protect the individual as well as to control reality by an act of will. Herzog constructs the appearance of "habitual vagueness, the proud air of abstraction"; he is "sick with abstractions" according to Madeleine (246, 123). Herzog eventually admits that "he has copped a plea all his life" with "weakness, or sickness," "(alternating with arrogance)" to "preserv[e] equilibrium" or, as Madeleine complains, to manipulate others (285). Herzog's Tante Taube employs the same strategy during her first marriage to keep her privileges as her husband's one and only darling, as well as to enjoy sex while pretending not to: "'*Gottseliger* Kaplitzky didn't want I should have children. The doctor thought it would be bad for mine heart. And every time ... Kaplitzky-*alehoshalom* took care on everything. I didn't even looked" (247). Himmelstein, Gersbach, and Madeleine appeal to their battle-scars to evoke sympathy and get their own way. Thus the construction of the image of weakness or sickness serves to hide strength as well as to provide shelter. The construction of the image of strength has the opposite function, to provide support and hide weakness. Shapiro, Himmelstein, Gersbach, Madeleine, Herzog, Ramona, each of them constructs a particular image of invincibility. But as Herzog realizes when he contemplates Ramona's pose of invincibility, such constructs are no more invincible than the person:

> Indeed, Ramona did look like those figures of sex and swagger. But there was something intensely touching about her, too. She struggled, she fought. She needed extraordinary courage to hold this poise. In this world, to be a woman who took matters into her own hands! And this courage of hers was unsteady. At times it trembled. (337)

The "garment" of constructed appearances is in this sense as necessary for man to advance unscathed through life, as that of the body, but both constructs are frail and not enough in themselves to sustain human existence.

Bellow plays the grotesque image of organic growth against the various images of processes of mechanical construction, maintenance, destruction and reconstruction of external forms which he presents as symptomatic of the contemporary value system; rationalism, by ascribing absolute value to the concrete, the objective, cultivates exhaustion, death, because objects are disposable. Herzog repeatedly notes the busy activity outside his apartment of machines tearing down buildings and constructing new. When he passes the demolition site, it seems like a place where man brings his holy objects to burn like incense in offering to the Great Devourer:

> The great metal ball swung at the walls.... Everything it touched wavered and burst.... There rose a white tranquil cloud of plaster dust. ... [I]n the widening area of demolition was a fire, fed by the wreckage. Moses heard the air, softly pulled toward the flames, felt the heat. The workmen, heaping the bonfire with wood, threw strips of molding like javelins. Paint and varnish smoked like incense. The old flooring burned gratefully -- the funeral of exhausted objects.... The sun ... was surrounded by a dazzling

> broth of atmospheric gases. … [P]eople were spattered with red stains,… he himself was flecked on the arms and chest. (175)

In a world where rationalism rules and death is god, all human values get inverted. Bondage becomes an integral part of the ordinary as Herzog discovers in his 'objective' experiment. His attempts to preserve the values of the past take material form; become attachment to "slabs of nothingness" (259). He becomes a slave to the old house in Ludeyville, valiantly fighting a losing battle against its deterioration with renovation, neglecting almost all but its maintenance and the *"Do-It-Yourself Encyclopedia"* (120). Madeleine, unable to integrate her living past into her present, brings home "busted commodes" and "spinning wheels" in 'objective' substitution (122). She erects a wall of "big, dusty volumes of an ancient Russian encyclopedia" between herself and Herzog (57). In Herzog and Madeleine's marriage, love becomes hate, potency becomes impotence, and their marriage becomes a battle for domination, slavery. In hindsight Herzog sees the relevance of Pope's lines from "On the Collar of a Dog" which he returns to a few times "… His Highness' dog at Kew,/ Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you?" (121). The dog image appropriately captures his marital bondage and his strategy of showing meekness in return for meekness as well as his conceit of being in control as Madeleine's saviour when "she and Gersbach managed and planned every step [he] took," as if he were a dog on a leash (53). When Madeleine compares herself when she first met Herzog to "a frightened puppy" that Herzog saw himself saving, it suggests that the power hierarchy was not always in her favour (124). Freedom, when rationalism rules, takes a destructive bent, Bellow suggests when Herzog writes:

> *Since the last question, also the first one, the question of death, offers us the interesting alternatives of disintegrating ourselves by our own wills in proof of our "freedom," or the acknowledging that we owe a human life to this waking spell of existence, regardless of the void. (After all, we have no positive knowledge of that void.)* (314)

The rationalist saviour extends to another person his freedom to disintegrate.

Devouring Self-*Con*struction

Bellow uses the motif of devouring and expending essence to differentiate between the impulse to save another, sacrifice oneself for the benefit of another, and salvation in its transcendent form in the service of a self-aggrandizing rationale. When Tante Taube asks Herzog to "[r]emember that [she] helped" him, "saved [him]" when his father threatened to shoot him in a fit of rage at his son's mismanagement of his life, it acts as a gentle reminder of the natural human desire to be of use and get credit for it even when both she and Herzog know that Jonah's threat to kill his son was a dramatic gesture, like his threat to disinherit him; "trying to act out the manhood [Herzog] should have had" (253, 259). Bellow suggests that the actual and natural means by which human beings 'sacrifice' themselves, on the other hand, is to expend their life-energy -- libido, essence -- for another, mostly through toil, passion, or the gift of time and care. Working and providing for others is a sacrifice of one's essence and so is Sarah Herzog's spoiling of her son by dragging him on the sled, as well as Jonah Herzog's attempts to startle Herzog awake with his passion and threats, and the time and care Willie, Ramona, and Asphalter expend to assist Herzog. Death, it is not an end in itself when the man in Scott's Polar Expedition that Herzog writes about to Marco *"went out and lost himself to give the others a chance to survive. He was ailing, footsore, couldn't keep up any longer"* (314). Although grounded in his own exhaustion and eventually futile, Owen's voluntary death was the gift of life, energy, and hope in affirmation of the value of human life. Tennie's gift of the abstract of her life to Pontritter is wasted and self-destructive in an altogether different way. Her act of salvation is akin to the tendency Herzog detects in Ramona's hopelessly persistent suitor George Hoberly: "See how a man will submit his whole life to some extreme endeavor, often crippling even killing himself in his chosen sphere" (208).

Different yet is the saviour who destroys what he sets out to save. Nachman's part in Laura's demise is an extension of his own self-destruction, which again is directed by his reaction to his cultural environment which drives him in pursuit of irrationality in response to the emphasis on rationality. Herzog's attempts to save Madeleine run parallel to Nachman's but not to the same insane extremes. Herzog indicates in a letter to "Monsignor Hilton, the priest who had brought Madeleine into the [Catholic] Church," that his marriage to Madeleine was in part their attempt *"to save themselves from … nihilism"* (102). Herzog tries to save Madeleine and, as it turns out, she tries to save him, even if he eventually "wore her out, asking for help, support" (38). Although aiming to save Madeleine by giving her the conventional life she never had, Herzog, when he believes Madeleine might have "spells" of insanity "for the rest of her life," responds with "melancholy" and "some satisfaction too"; here is the whore enjoying both the sensuality of devouring and the glory of benevolence, pity (57). In their battle for domination, disguised as salvation, Herzog and Madeleine, both, employ the strategy of declaring the other or driving the other insane to gain the upper hand as the one who is rational: "[ ] Madeleine says I'm insane"; "But it's she who's sick, sicker than I am" (53, 56). Their names are significant, Moses being the precursor of the Christian saviour, Madeleine being a variant of Magdalene, from Maria of Magdala or Magdalen(e), the ultimate penitent whore, dedicated to the Saviour. Bellow suggests that in a contemporary rationalist context, the whore hides beneath the facade of the saviour. Herzog keeps getting into religious competitions over Madeleine, first with the Catholic Church (the Papal Whore of Babylon) to which Madeleine had turned seemingly in atonement, although it remains unclear to what extent, if at all, she was 'the whore' after being sexually abused, except by accepting money to keep it quiet (117). But his main competition in saving Madeleine are Dr. Edvig and Gersbach. Edvig is busy trying to bring Madeleine back to the fold of the Church, and Gersbach, in a way, is busy trying to save her from Herzog. Yet both Edvig and Gersbach encourage Herzog to continue his attempts to 'save' Madeleine when he finds that "for her" he is not the "savior" she "wants" (54). Gersbach tells Herzog that he is "effing it up with all this egotistical shit"; Herzog should "take care of her … [a]nd expect nothing in return" (61).

In practice the doctrine of the whore does work both sides of the street by injecting moral pathos into devouring brutality as Herzog envisions in his image. Gersbach, with his Oedipal lame leg, has 'murdered' his 'father' and 'married' his 'mother,' but Herzog is convinced that Gersbach's appropriation of his friend's life was intended as a benevolent, necessary act, painful to himself: "'He has to do it for me, out of friendship, out of pity and sheer greatness of soul'" (194). Throughout his affair with Madeleine, during and after Madeleine and Herzog's divorce, Gersbach assures Herzog with tears of pity, hugs, and advices that he cares for him more than anything, and shows him the consideration of sending him news of his daughter while he is away in Europe. Gersbach's wife Phoebe tells Herzog that her husband "[a]dored" Herzog, "read all those books so [Herzog would] have somebody to talk to," "[t]ried to become an intellectual because he wanted to help" Herzog, "tried to set [Herzog] on the right track again" and prevent Madeleine from "ruining" him (261). He brings Herzog Martin Buber's works to 'console' him after the divorce with Buber's arguments on the immorality of *"turn[ing] a man (a subject) into a thing (an object),"* an *"It"* instead of an *"I"* (64). Herzog seems to find that Gersbach sincerely wanted to help by sparing him the effort of doing a miserable job of being himself and being a saviour for Madeleine; *"True insincerity is hard to find"* (38). But in effect Gersbach treats Herzog as an "It" or an abstraction that he himself can improve upon and transform into an "I" for greater success in social advancement: "hard ruthless action taken against a man is the assertion by his evildoers that he is fully knowable. [Madeleine and Gersbach] put me down, ergo they claimed final knowledge of Herzog. They *knew* me!" (299).

Knowing and accepting one's own intricate and inconsistent human nature well enough to be a functional human being is hard enough as Bellow shows through Herzog;

the difficulties are compounded by rationalist certainty that man is a known entity and readiness to tell others what they are rather than leaving it to themselves to discover as far as can be managed. Herzog is as culpable as others: *"A very special sort of lunatic expects to inculcate his principles.* Sandor Himmelstein, Valentine Gersbach, Madeleine P. Herzog, Moses himself. *Reality instructors. They want to teach you -- to punish you with -- lessons of the Real"* (125). Bellow hits particularly hard at psychology for undermining the means available to man to know himself and know others. When Madeleine refuses to acknowledge her sign of penitence on an Ash Wednesday when Herzog notes a "spot" of "ashes" between her eyes, he fails to connect it with other signs of guilt because his psychiatrist Dr. Edvig interprets her worries that Herzog is having her followed as a "paranoid episode" and thus abstracts him from what is going on (54, 56). Dr. Edvig keeps Herzog occupied "on the couch" so that Madeleine and Gersbach can be "safe in bed" together and he is to help to discredit Herzog as "a sick man,... perhaps even hopeless," to be put away as a lunatic after the divorce (53). Dr. Edvig himself is not only fascinated with Madeleine's "lapse from the Church" but also falls in love with her once she becomes his patient and is her champion when Herzog gets suspicious: *"my hostile suspicions of Gersbach were unfounded, even, you hinted, paranoid"* (53). Dr. Edvig's diagnoses are authoritative, pat: he classifies both Madeleine's signs of guilt and Herzog's altogether reasonable suspicions as paranoia. By *"conning"* Dr. Edvig, Madeleine makes him *"a useful instrument"* for carrying on and concealing her and Gersbach's 'whoring,' but the con is there to begin with in Dr. Edvig's theory (55).

In order to show assumptions taken for granted and developed through characters in the clearest possible light as the **con**-structs they really are, Bellow puts them in their proper context and exposes the animistic forces they serve to conceal. Once natural human reactions and needs are defined as mental sickness or instability, extreme deviations are allotted the status of the norm. Freud's rationalist emphasis in his theories is accompanied by his stress on the irrational, eagerness to lend pathological terminology to human behaviour so that the healthy psyche becomes indistinguishable from the sick. Freud indeed provides the most sickening rationalization in all of *Herzog* in the case Herzog witnesses at a New York court, of the young woman who physically assaulted her young son so violently, after maltreating him for long, that he died. Her lover who witnessed the murder from their bed, complacently smoking, without interfering, "explained that her boy was a problem child. She could not toilet-train him. He drove her wild sometimes the way he dirtied himself. And the crying all night!" (239). These perversions of Freudian theory are to serve as rationales to justify murder by showing as unnatural a little boy's natural reactions to severe maltreatment.

The existential conceit of Angst, loss of self in a modern Wasteland, becomes sickening when compared to the young mother's actual Wasteland reality and loss of self. As Herzog emphatically points out, there is a vast difference between the kind of destruction he goes through in enhancement of his growth and greater depth of being as opposed to the destruction of *"human beings ... by pain, when they have the added torment of losing their humanity first, so that their death is a total defeat"* (317). Herzog, with his education and the freedom of choice and time that his middle-class status grants him, has the opportunity and wherewithal to turn a potentially destructive situation, that could lead to suicide, into a maturing process; turn an experience of *"evil"* into *"good,"* into a spiritual *"exercise"* of repentance and illumination (317). The young woman who kills her son is herself both the victim and the perpetrator of the other kind of destruction. Her hearing reveals that she was "born lame," with a low I.Q., to working class parents who "neglected" her in favour of her brother; her parents absolve themselves of all responsibility for her and ties with her upon her trial (236). Due to a brain lesion she has "violent epileptoid fits of rage" and she was "molested, later sexually abused by adolescent boys" (236). Her son she had after a brief affair with a married man. She refused to give him up for adoption, and treated him even more brutally than she had been; starved him, refused to clean or attend to him in any way, beat him repeatedly and kicked him, "heaviest" "[o]n the belly, and especially in the region of the genitals" (237). She left the boy's dead body bruised, torn, broken -- the brain damaged and the liver ruptured. But because damaged from the outset both in mind and body, she cannot be held fully responsible for her actions. The moral realities dependent upon reason are denied her and the prolonged rejection and maltreatment she has suffered have cancelled the humane aspects from the construct she could possibly have of reality, so that only the destructive side of the animistic in human nature remains.

Another pathetic case which Herzog witnesses combines grotesquely nihilist issues through the motif of the 'whore': the concept of loss of self and the Sartrean solution that in the absence of self man's life may become meaningful through choice of actions or roles in situations not entirely of his making. At a New York court Herzog witnesses the dismal results of the corruption of a child by the seduction of ideas when he witnesses the trial of "a boy" for attempted robbery. The boy's

> face was curiously lined, some of its grooves feminine, others masculine enough. … His dyed hair was long, stiff, dirty. He had pale round eyes and he smiled with empty -- no, worse than empty -- cheerfulness. His voice … was high-pitched, ice-cold, thoroughly drilled in its affectations. (227)

He is "'a prostitute'" who goes by the names of Aleck or Alice, depending upon "'what people want [him] for'" (228). Herzog finds it likely that the boy "defied a bad reality" "[w]ith his bad fantasy, subliminally asserting" that the magistrate's "authority" and his own "degeneracy" were "one and the same" because the magistrate would also have had to "spread his legs," so to speak, to "get appointed" (229). But,

> Aleck was the one who claimed glamour, even a certain amount of "spiritual" credit. Someone must have told him that fellatio was the path to truth and honor. So this bruised, dyed Aleck *also* had an idea. He was purer, loftier than any square, did not lie. It wasn't only Sandor who had

> such ideas -- strange, minimal ideas of truth, honor. Realism. Nastiness in its transcendent position. (229)

It seems to Herzog that the magistrate, on the other hand, neither avoids personal responsibility nor glorifies his own 'nastiness' necessary to get ahead: "His face was illusionless, without need of hypocrisy" (229). Nor has he lost sight of human concern: "Aleck, if you keep this up you'll be in Potter's Field. ... I give you four-five years" (229).

Bellow eventually expands the motif of the whore to encompass the cluster of contemporary ideas of devaluation. Through Aleck, as he compares him to the magistrate, Bellow exposes the grotesque distortion in constructs of reality that accept only the dehumanizing, degenerate, disintegrative aspects and shows them as cultivation of death and flight from reality. Facing reality, Bellow indicates, means to be fully cognizant of the darker aspects of reality and oneself without cultivating them. The courtroom scene with Aleck works towards reestablishing the hierarchy of values inverted in the motif of the 'whore' disguised as a 'saviour.' Ramona's deliberate and partly playful posing as a whore to increase sensual enjoyment restores the positive value of sexuality. Her sexual manipulation of Herzog to get him to say that he belongs to her only, on the other hand, affirms that the body, like all things human, can function as a **con**-struct. Bellow also puts this inverted value system in its place through Herzog's ex-mother-in-law Polina by baring the absurdity of allowing signs of senility to become the norm for the construct of reality. Polina's mental decline affects her imagination with a grotesque version of the images of human reality that Shapiro and Himmelstein propound. In her irrational state, Polina projects her own decline on to her daughter, accusing her of moral decline She thinks her daughter Daisy, "[a]n utterly steady, reliable woman, responsible to the point of grimness," has become a whore (221). The senile, like Polina, the insane, like Laura, the mentally handicapped, like the young woman, and those like Aleck whose concept of themselves has been thoroughly perverted and destroyed, these are the ones who Bellow shows as having actually lost their selves. Attempting to escape illusion, rationalism adopts delusion as the premise for their human paradigm, thus creating a new and destructive illusion.

Bellow suggests that in practice the intellectual concept of loss of self is a manipulative device, a rationalization concealing a power strategy. The concept of loss of self serves the intellectual for self-advancement in his given sphere; denying others a status of self meanwhile raising his own status: master, slave. Much in the way Madeleine uses Dr. Edvig's diagnoses to serve her own ends, loss or lack of self provides rationales for a dog eat dog attitude towards others. The letter Herzog writes to his son Marco suggests the importance of removing a person's identity before treating him brutally. Herzog reminds Marco that in the competition between Scott and Amundsen to the Pole, Amundsen owed the success of his Antarctic Expedition *"to his use of dogs instead of ponies"* (315). When food supplies were exhausted Amundsen fed the weaker dogs to the stronger; *"Hungry as they were, the dogs would sniff at the flesh of their own and back away. The skin had to be removed before they would eat it"* (315). Dog will not eat dog until its identity is removed. Gersbach, Madeleine, and Himmelstein remove Herzog's identity -- his status of "subject," self, "I" -- to make him into an "object," "it," to be devoured. Herzog points out that Himmelstein differs from Simkin as "Reality instructor" in that he is "cruel": "It's the cruelty that gets me, not the realism" (30). Those who suffer the consequences are the ones who are vulnerable, because of their immaturity, mental or social situation, and those made vulnerable by deception.

Bellow suggests through the imagery of man as a devouring animal that when his appetite for life goes astray, it serves death instead of life. The intentions may be good, but as Robert Burns memorably put it in "To a Mouse": "The best laid schemes o' mice and men/ Gang aft a-gley." "A-gley" "gang" the various schemes in *Herzog:* Nachman's to preserve the pure soul; Jonah Herzog's to strike it rich in bootlegging; Herzog's to save Madeleine and the ordinary; Nietzsche's to shatter illusion and awaken humanity to reality; Freud's to keep the human psyche healthy; Sartre's to lend support to modern man, straddling the void, by offering the solution of politics, action, and fulfillment through roles, and so forth. Rationalism, as Bellow amply demonstrates through Herzog, disregards human fallibility by having too great faith in human reason and rationally figured solutions. Bellow indicates through parallel association that rationalist schemes which involve teaching others how to view themselves, human nature, reality, or how to conduct their own life are destructive in the manner of Burns' mice: well intended but short sighted.

If regarded in the context of Bellow's development of rationalism and the bent it encourages in the imagination, the mice in Herzog's house gain added significance. They destroy his "preserves" by making holes in the "paraffin-sealed" treasures of sweetness, deprive him of light by gnawing "birthday candles down to the wicks." Thought bred by rationalist emphasis, Bellow suggests, eats at the "sweetness and light" that Matthew Arnold defined as the aims of literature in the face of disintegration in his "Preface" to *Culture and Anarchy:* "He who works for sweetness and light united, works to make reason and the will of God prevail" ( ). The phrase "sweetness and light" as definition of the aims of literature occurs initially in Swift's preface to "Battel of the Books" in 1707. Herzog says about mice: "I'm fond of them but they chew everything. Even book bindings. They seem to love glue. And wax. Paraffin. Candles. Anything like that" (329). Rationalists as misguided mice detract from man's enlightenment, intellectual and creative, by dismantling the humanist values represented by "sweetness and light," so that "the centre cannot hold," "Things fall apart," as Yeats put it in "The Second Coming." Herzog finds that creativity has taken a turn into: "[c]reative suffering" like his own, because "[y]ou must be forlorn"; "bad fantasy," like Aleck's; "[t]he deeper creativity of the police imagination" of disguising themselves as transvestites to lure unsuspecting people like the young German intern to yield to temptation and get convicted for crime; the "creative depth of modern degeneracy" that Madeleine and Gersbach's relationship and Phoebe' acceptance of it represent (219, 179, 229, 227, 263). The inversion of values is extensive: "Former vices now health measures. … Public confession of each deep wound which at one time was borne as if nothing were amiss" (179). Herzog suggests that the relationship between life and literature has also been inverted and objectified: "Literate people appropriate all the best things they can find in books, and dress themselves in them just as certain crabs are supposed to beautify themselves with seaweed" (217). In this inversion, 'Truth, Beauty, Goodness' become 'Cons, Nastiness, Brutality.'

Bellow implies that by cancelling all absolute power but his own, the rationalist theorist also inverts religious hierarchy by offering himself in the place of God with disastrous results. By bringing in the association with "dog" as an inversion of 'god,' Bellow underlines the assumption of control, tyranny, that the various factual and fictional intellectuals in *Herzog* practice, presuming absolute mastery over human knowledge. Herzog describes Shapiro in his greedy intellectual frenzy as a dog with "snarling, wild laugh" and "white froth forming on his lips as he attacked everyone" (70). Shapiro has the world of learning at his command and Madeleine "reveal[s] the wealth of her mind to Shapiro"; Herzog recalls them as *"tossing [their] heads, coquetting, bragging, showing off your clean sharp teeth -- the learned badinage"* (76). Madeleine is frequently referred to as a bitch, by Herzog in particular but also by Simkin and Himmelstein. Her ambition suggests an association with the Bitch Goddess. Bellow indicates that man's territorial instincts are particularly pronounced in the intellectual. He establishes a connection between the gibbon ape, Shapiro, and Gibbon the historian and author of *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, whose "resemblance" of "fat cheeks" is noticeable (315). Herzog associates Shapiro with "[t]he vision of mankind as a lot of cannibals, running in packs, gibbering, bewailing its own murders, pressing out the living world as excrement" (77). Later Herzog refers to studies that indicate that man descended *"from a carnivorous, terrestrial type"* of *"ape"* suggesting by implication that the decline Shapiro emphasizes is in a way a wilful devolution: *"Apes in their own habitat are less sexually driven than those in captivity. It must be that captivity, boredom, breeds lustfulness. And it may also be that the territorial instinct is stronger than the sexual"*

(320). The manner in which Bellow demonstrates how each character's ideological construct is shaped by his own personal reality suggests that master/ slave constructs of reality are produced by the extreme 'dog eat dog' competitiveness of *"the delirious professions"* (77). But Bellow shows in *Herzog* that the 'dog eat dog' mentality goes deeper than that; it is a cultural phenomenon, a part of the '**rat** race.'

Eventually the **rat** in '**rat**-ionalist' encompasses all the negative connotations Bellow develops through the other animal images, all the negative connotations he brings out in his development of the '**ab**-straction' and '**con**-struction' of the 'whore' garbed as 'saviour.' The rats in Ludeyville eat into Herzog's "bread" -- the world of matter which bread conventionally represents -- eating away at the very basics of ordinary existence. Bellow's development suggests that modern mass culture not only encourages extreme competitiveness for social privileges and status, but excessive insistence upon self-importance, as if in defiance of the various constructs -- social, political, psychological, philosophical, historical -- that insist upon modern man's insignificance:

> *There comes a time when every son of Adam wishes to arise before the rest, with all his quirks and twitches and tics, all the glory of his self-adored ugliness, his grinning teeth, his sharp nose, his madly twisted reason, saying to the rest -- in an overflow of narcissism which he interprets as benevolence -- "I am come to be your witness. I am come to be your exemplar."* (324)

The image suggests a rat. Bellow connects Himmelstein explicitly, Madeleine, Gersbach, and Shapiro implicitly with this image of the rat. Herzog describes Himmelstein, with his protruding teeth, as "Sandor, that humped rat" (152). He frequently refers to Madeleine's "tic" of working her "straight" nose when "peculiarly stirred" like a rodent, possibly a squirrel; "her nose twitches"; "the tip of her nose moved, and her brows … rose with nervous eagerness" (8, 190, 71). Mice were born under Gersbach's hospital bed when his leg was amputated. However, the placement of Herzog's letter suggesting the best means to control rats, a placement immediately after his letters to Madeleine and Gersbach and before the one to Nietzsche in the conclusion, invites association between them and rats by implication. Herzog's description of Shapiro as "a brute" whose "nose is sharp" is more explicitly connected to the rat-like image above (69, 70).

The rat in *Herzog* refers in particular to betrayal. When Tante Zipporah warns Jonah Herzog not to trust his partner in crime Voplonsky, she describes him: "A rat! A rat with pointed red whiskers and long crooked teeth and reeking of scorched hoof"; "hooligans like him "don't have skins, teeth, fingers like you but hides, fangs, claws" (145). She is proved right by the "gap" Jonah gets "in his teeth" in reminder; a rat is the most competent competitor in the underworld, in the rat-race, and always prepared to rat on others (147).

Betrayal, cruelty, vindictiveness and unscrupulous devaluation of others are the human characteristics that Bellow depicts most uncompromisingly through visceral images which are debased variations upon the natural images of earth and dust as links between natural life and death. Olfactory and visual images of dirt refer to characters' debasement of humanity -- of treating others like dirt. Madeleine told Herzog that she would "teach" him and he acknowledges that she was "an education"; like Gersbach and Himmelstein she negates Herzog's "human life [a]s a subject" (125, 193). Herzog's reference to "the dirty way [Madeleine] had with her" and June's confession that she does not "'like'" Gersbach because "'[h]e doesn't smell good'" identify them as akin in spirit with both Aleck who is dirty because "'[f]ilth makes it better'" and the prostitute that Herzog sees at the Chicago police station who "had dirty ways," "[l]ewd knowledge" (298, 279, 228, 297). According to Ramona, Herzog's "'skin has a delicious odor,'" on the other hand, free from the "stale, dusty kind" emitted by old people (197). Gersbach and Madeleine 'clean' Herzog 'out' but refuse to 'come clean.' When Herzog asks Madeleine "whether Valentine had become her lover" she says: "Do you think I could give myself to a man whose shit smells like that!" (193). The most striking instance of cruel rejection of an individual through the image of dirt is when the mother of the young woman who killed her child, after failing her altogether and failing her child as well, absolves herself and her husband of personal responsibility for their daughter: "'This is no kid of mine. We wash our hands of her'" (236).

Bellow suggests through imagery that **rat**ionalism breeds the values of the **rat** by offering a debilitating competitive human paradigm which rationalizes tyranny, spreads rationales like rats breeding pestilence which undermines the weak with rot, inflames the strong with frenzied greed for more, gnaws at the cultural and human foundations which sustain man and offers only betrayal and dirt in its place. Bellow evokes a visceral reaction to rationalism as a betrayal of all values, natural, cultural, religious, democratic, literary, and, last but not least, of the pursuit for knowledge, the very value rationalism intended to defend from the decay caused by the imagination. Herzog doubts that poison is the best way to fight poison in his suggestion for the best way to control rats: "you put birth-control chemicals in the baits. Poisons will never work (for Malthusian reasons; reduce the population somewhat and it only increases more vigorously). But several years of contraception may eliminate your rat problem" (318).

Play of Meaning

Bellow conducts his refutation of scientific thought conditioned by rationalism in the most cogent and effective manner possible: by demonstration. He demonstrates through the grotesque that so called scientific discourse retains the politics of tyranny in which it was grounded by Hobbes; privileging of fact involves a cancellation of the contextual struggle of language -- a tyranny of signification which Bakhtin calls monologization. Bellow exposes the inherent falsification that occurs when the subjectivity of language is suppressed and indicates that loss of faith in the capacity of language to relate to human reality is caused precisely by rationalist use of language which cancels experience, value, and meaning that transcends the linguistic plane. Such language, Bellow indicates, no longer registers the hierarchy of contradictions, modifications, ulterior meanings and motives by which discourse validates truth.

In his development of character through the grotesque, Bellow stresses that language conditions thought and experience; language is the single most significant transmission of cultural values. Madeleine's upbringing is a study in corruption by the means of language, a training in disregard of the value of truth and reliance upon language to create deceptive surfaces to manipulate others. Herzog assumes that Aleck's sense of self and reality was corrupted by the very same means: by language. By undermining the hierarchy of values inscribed upon language, rationalist constructs dismantle the most important means man has to make sense of his existence. Language that claims objectivity becomes particularly treacherous when it makes human existence suspect by assigning negative terms, carrying negative value, to natural human conduct, no matter whether it is to ascribe to all humanizing aspects and activities (emotion, faith, hope, imagination, memory, etc.) weakness, in the manner of Nietzsche, pathological attributes in the manner of Freud, or regard them as falsifying because subjective, as scientific thought in general tends to do. Cancellation of these humanizing aspects from language does not make them cease to exist, as Bellow demonstrates through the different characters; they simply manifest themselves uncontrolled, because unacknowledged, in the negative manner ascribed to them, and encourage the construction of fictions that fail to correspond to actuality. Bellow shows that rationalist dismantling of traditional values is in effect a construction of another value system which inverts all traditional values instead of being a value free construct.

Literary discourse has the capacity to work by entirely different means, as Bellow demonstrates in *Herzog*. Once Bellow has dismantled the dichotomy between the extremes of preference either for the abstract or for fact as simply two means of bypassing reality, by transcendence or by trans-descendence, what remains is common humanity and common strategies for dealing with the mutual dilemma of managing contrary basic drives. The sameness of the animistic and the divine, and of the surfaces man constructs of and for himself to accommodate both, Bellow suggests, would lead to the rational conclusion that man has no individuality, no self, no essence that sets him apart from others, because the same human issues recur in literature, in philosophy, in social science, in religion, and so forth. But as Herzog notes:

> a man is somehow more than his "characteristics," all the emotions strivings, tastes, and constructions it pleases him to call "My life." We have ground to hope that a Life is something more than such a cloud of particles, mere facticity. Go through what is comprehensible and you conclude that only the incomprehensible gives any light. (266)

The human and humanizing elements of the characters in *Herzog* attest to the validity of Herzog's insight; their distinct individuality and their capacity to evoke sympathy even when appearing in their least flattering light coexists with the similarities that Bellow highlights in apparently altogether dissimilar characters through *leitmotifs* drawn from Herzog's image of evolution.

Herzog notes that "[t]rue things" manifest themselves "in grotesque forms" (269). In his depiction of character Bellow plays the narrowness of the grotesque who grasps a single truth against the subject of the characters themselves and shows that the construct of reality each character accepts as objective truth is only one single and subjective facet of her or his own reality. Bellow plays the sameness of the characters' animistic and benevolent drives against their depth and inscrutability. The very premise for Bellow's demonstration of his argument is his grounding of the narrative in a single subject. All of Herzog's value judgments are grounded in his personal experience and they are grounded in his desire, on the one hand, to justify his own actions and preferences, and on the other to understand and therefore give a truthful account. Herzog's common ground with other characters, his individuality, his formative influence, his experience, his learning and profession, his argumentation and his images, his actions and his words, all of these provide accessible measuring points against which the validity of his account can be tested and against which the value system of the author can be tested. Objectivity is established through the interaction between different subjective judgements.

Madeleine is the best example because she is the character who tests the subjective rendering most heavily. She is not only defined through Herzog's account of their years together and her actions as described through Herzog, but also through her Aunt Zelda, her mother, her father, her own description of her formative years, as well as through other characters' reactions to her: the babysitter's, Himmelstein's, Simkin's, Sono's, Shapiro's, the policeman's at the Chicago police station, and Ramona's on the basis of Herzog's accounts. In comparison to Gersbach who is depicted by the same means as she, except he never interacts with Herzog in the narrative present of the framed narrative, Madeleine gets noticeably better reports from other characters than he. As Aharoni amply demonstrates in her study of Bellow's female characters, Madeleine is a credible, multifaceted, and fascinating character and Herzog turns out to be guilty of most of the things he accuses her of. But as pointed out by the various other critics, she is also a grotesque, a narrow and distorted type. And so are most of the other characters, Herzog there included. Much of the negative colouring upon Madeleine arises from Herzog's elaborate accusations. A wife described by a husband who discovers that she has been having an affair with his best friend for years without his notice would hardly be credible without negative colouring.

Bellow's character depiction of Madeleine, and of the other characters who are depicted by the same means of depth and distortion, shows where the weight of his criticism falls. He invites sympathy for the characters who do their best to ruthlessly annul Herzog; he shows them as touchingly human, maimed by past or present suffering, he hints at their human uncertainties beneath their protective ideological poses. There are mysterious depths in the different characters, things left unexplained or indicating that there is more to them than Herzog's rendering, coloured by his subjective reaction to ill treatment, will fully admit. There is for instance the possibility that Himmelstein's betrayal of Herzog is based on concern for June and conviction based on observation as well as hearsay that Herzog is mad. Bellow also leaves open the possibility that Madeleine, once she finds the love Herzog suspects she wanted above all else, will discover the life-giving aspects she suppresses in herself. Bellow's most biting attacks are not directed at man's mixed nature, animistic and sublime, and his self-serving maneuvers to cater to both, but modern man's cultivation of thought and values that negate human reality and cultivate destructive fictions negated by the reality of the self.

By playing surface against depth, narrowness against openness, subjectivity against objectivity, abstract statements against images, and by measuring them against "moral realities," both in language and in characterization, Bellow demonstrates that literary discourse can speak infinite volumes beyond the language of facts and objects; the play of literary meaning moves within yet transcends literal linguistic meaning and the undiscoverable mystery of the human heart is a part of its human truth. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Bellow's development of the grotesque and highly significant to his argumentation is his method of allowing the different ideological assumptions that he opposes to emerge fully in the narrative and enhance the meaning of the narrative by being tested, found true. But even if accepting these different ideas and approaches as valuable and bringing insights into aspects of human nature, language, and literature, Bellow also demonstrates that they fail to account for the whole. Even more importantly, they fail to account for ordinary human existence and instead they account predominantly for the extreme deviations. The young mother who kills her son answers most fully to the ideas Bellow dismantles in his development of characters who lead a fairly ordinary existence: decline, loss of self, being ruled by animistic drives which find an outlet in her attacks upon the surfaces of her son's body which correspond to her own sufferings. Treating her son like an "it," she makes his life "nasty, brutish, and short." Bellow places the value system of contemporary scientific thought shaped by rationalism at the bottom of his hierarchy, as defilement of human reality and nature. By drawing upon what he finds of value in the insights and methods of different theorists and by categorically rejecting their values, be it Hobbes, Robbe-Grillet, Sartre, Nietzsche, Freud, or Heidegger, Bellow pointedly demonstrates the thrust of his narrative argumentation: the need to select worthwhile cultural values and insights and get rid of the dirt. Bellow shows that narrative argumentation does not have to resort to tyranny; literary discourse can allow the opponent to show the enlightened part of his aspect as well as the shadowed and distorted, because truth and distortion appear to the imagination in grotesque forms and the play of literary discourse can both dismantle and restore hierarchy.

Chapter 7

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF NARRATIVE FORMS: ORGANIZATION

All narrative elements in *Herzog* are tightly interconnected. Each reading, focusing on character, on the grotesque, or on organization, is bound to bring up repetitions, but because of the narrative density of *Herzog* and the different emphases in formal signification that each reading brings out, there is nonetheless surprisingly little repetition; each reading, in a way, brings out a new kind of novel. Bellow's organization of his narrative is as encyclopedic and controlled as his development of character through conventional and grotesque means, and each is dependent upon the other. Each type of character which contributes to Herzog's construction corresponds to the organizing strategy with which it customarily occurs, and combined, the character type and the strategy of organization indentify a specific narrative convention or form. Bellow's organizational strategies merge the two main dialogues discussed so far. On the one hand, Bellow's organization continues the dialogue he establishes between the narrative tradition and contemporary trends. On the other hand, his organization continues the dialogue he establishes between creative reason and rationalism through the grotesque. These two dialogues combine in Bellow's parodic baring of the dominant structures underlying the contemporary rationalist emphasis in realism.

Bellow's structuring of his narrative emphasizes that form and matter are interdependent and that no one narrative form can claim exhaustive capacity to depict human reality, any more than one kind of character or a single grotesque truth; in actuality each type of form and character serves particularly well to capture a facet of reality, but the whole is greater than the facet. He shows that a rationalist approach to human nature either only acknowledges conscious thought, leaving out the very forces that drive man through life, hidden as they are in the subconscious, or attempts to sever them from their human subjectivity by tracing the animistic exclusively in relation to the surface. Literature, on the other hand, has through the ages apprehended the universal structures that lend shape to human life although the individual remains unconscious of their manifestation in himself, as Bellow indicates through Herzog.

The dialogic interaction between character and author, life and literature, tradition and modernity, is of major importance in Bellow's organization of *Herzog*. Bellow's employment of the grotesque amply demonstrates the overpowering difficulties the individual encounters when trying to lend conscious shape to the chaos of his reality, to be the 'author' of his own life. Not only will "the best laid schemes" "Gang aft a-gley," as Bellow shows, but the individual also operates according to a scheme essentially of his making but not necessarily apprehended except vaguely, in hindsight. When discussing with his brother Will why he married Madeleine, Herzog says:

> "I see exactly what I should avoid. Then, all of a sudden, I'm in bed with that very thing, and making love to it. As with Madeleine. She seems to have filled a special need." … "A very special need. I don't know what. She brought ideology into my life. Something to do with catastrophe. After all, it's an ideological age." (334)

Bellow, the literary author, not only captures in his narrative structure the chaotic flow that undermines Herzog's capacity for *"organization"* but also the deeper level of organization that lies below cognitive level and leads him by a principle of "need" in a direction that his head will tell him he "should avoid" (330, 334). Herzog as an individual character and as an Everyman needs to confront the darker aspects of life -- within himself, and within contemporary reality -- and find his own place within that context; discover his own capacity for evil and his own capacity to resist evil. Herzog as an "anachronistic" representative of the traditional self in the novel needs to confront contemporary nihilism in literary aesthetics, plummet into the void but find his way out of it by drawing upon the strategies and values that have sustained traditional character and discover their relations to contemporary strategies and values. The closely guarded 'secret' that Bellow ferrets out through Herzog is that underlying all the scepticism, the existentialist *Angst*, and denial of values, there is a search for values, improvement, hope, truth, that takes on a variety of guises.

Bellow uses four principal methods of bringing these concerns together in his organization of his narrative in *Herzog*. The most varied structural principle in *Herzog* is Bellow's plot organization of the story, his use of variations upon the quest motif to lead and shape the action, and bring it to a conclusion. But the most immediately noticeable organizational principle, because of its effect upon the narrative surface, is that of chaos, interruption, which Bellow accomplishes through achronological, non-sequential, non-causal ordering of the narration, in a modernist manner. Bellow evokes modernist ordering of narrative further with his employment of a circular structure and of closure rather than the conventional devices of bringing the main course of events to a resolution with death or with a firmly established direction for the future. The most clever and subtle organizational principle in *Herzog*, but entirely appropriate for the protagonist and Bellow's thematic development throughout the narrative, is that of persuasion in parallel to logical rhetorical ordering and problem solving. It ties in with the second organizational principle of the propositional sequence of story as Tzvetan Todorov defined it -- the sequential arrangement of the minimal narrative units in a structural movement of the story from a state of equilibrium that has been upset by some force to a reestablished equilibrium on new terms, as Raman Selden notes in *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* (59). Just as he unites almost imperceptibly in Herzog a variety of apparently incompatible character types, Bellow brings together so seamlessly these apparently incompatible organizational strategies that, except for his most obvious stuctural devices, they have escaped critical notice.

For the longest time Bellow's organization remained hidden in and hidden by the modernist surface, as is clear in the early criticism on *Herzog* in my review above, but glimpses into the intricate clockwork have gradually emerged. As I have already noted, Bradbury sees in *Herzog* a comic variant of the *Bildungsroman* plot, Abbott sees a comic variant of the revenge plot, or non-revenge, as Cohen puts it. And Gilbert Porter in "'Weirdly Tranquil' Vision: The Point of View of Moses Herzog," in the *Saul Bellow Journal*, reformulates Todorov's definition of the propositional sequence: "What passes for plot in the novel is a narrative strategy that moves Herzog from a state of agitation to a stage of rest, from a frantic search for direction to a discovery of that direction" (3). The main reason why Bellow's tightly controlled, extremely layered and interconnected organization of his narrative has escaped critics is very likely the emphasis on action, on what happens, as the determining factor for defining plot structure. But it does not help that Bellow deliberately defies precisely this understanding of plot organization. He uses conventional organizational strategies but combines them in the most unlikely manner, as he does the character elements. *Herzog* may also prove the validity of Edgar Allan Poe's insight in *The Purloined Letter*, that the best way to hide something is to place it in everyone's clear view. Precisely in the way he 'names' the different character types combined in Herzog, the different rationalist dogmas, the different animistic drives that rationalism disguises, the different humanist and national ideals that he finds undermined by rationalism, Bellow 'names' his organizing principles by having Herzog refer to them, albeit in a non-literary context. Bellow inscribes the deep structures of *Herzog* upon the linguistic surface of the novel.

Activity and Action

The basic story situation in *Herzog* can be summarized as the protagonist's search for truth and peace of mind after discovering that there was more to his divorce than met the eye. Bellow's plot arrangement can be examined from at least three different angles: from an Aristotelian angle of plot structure, from the angle of allegory where the quest figures as a pilgrimage, and from the angle of the narrative codes which move the plot through variations upon the quest motif -- the last bringing out Bellow's most interesting and meaningful organizational devices.

Aristotelian analysis of *Herzog's* structural arrangement gives the least satisfying results, but since its plot has been questioned so heavily, it is worth sketching out briefly. The problems introduced in the opening are murder and madness. The first chapter raises the question whether Herzog in Ludeyville is really mad or preparing to present himself as mad or possessed after having possibly committed murder during the time lapse from the New York opening. Complications are revealed and developed as the story unfolds, regressing back in time as the narrative progresses, and Herzog's motives for murder become more obvious. Herzog's trip to Chicago promises to bring the plot development to an inevitable conclusion but leads instead to his recognition, the turning point in the plot, that his plan of murder is ludicrous. The climax occurs when Herzog confronts Madeleine and makes use of his recognition of reality that has been cumulatively at work through the narrative. He knows that her customary strategy for survival is to keep things separate, that she is incapable of allowing past and present to merge and therefore cannot openly admit her affair with Gersbach to incriminate Herzog for intended murder, despite her desire to annihilate him. The *dénouement* and final recognition is Herzog's recovery of his senses, his peace of mind, himself.[1]

Analysis of the allegory of Moses' pilgrimage to the promised land is considerably more interesting and more in accordance with the terms set by the novel itself than Aristotelian analysis, but I will let a brief outline suffice. Herzog sees himself on a "pilgrimage" and the quest that is also a pilgrimage invites an association between *Herzog* and allegory such as *The Pilgrim's Progress* (17). Instead of being the exemplary Christian, however, Herzog as an allegorical figure is the "heart" of the modern novel, its life. The element of allegory in *Herzog* may not be rigidly sustained, but it is supported by such elements as the resemblance that Bellow establishes between Herzog's life and the novel in a contemporary context; the dignity of Jonah Herzog's *"I"* and the traditional, intrusive and authoritative, authorial narrator; the different reality instructors and the different aesthetic dictates. Bellow's noticeable emphasis on Madeleine's dramatic tendencies and theatrical background, as well as her domineering nature, her desire to annihilate Herzog, heavily suggest the modern muse sending out aesthetic dictates that the novel cancel its subjective concerns and be dramatic in the way of a play or film. Her secret pilfering of Herzog's funds invites the association that practitioners of these dictates, while claiming they were writing entirely new novels, nonetheless borrowed handsomely from the old tradition. Herzog describes her and Gersbach's appropriation of his roles as "symbiosis"; Gersbach tending to a popular presentation of intellectual subjects, with passion, energy, inexhaustible expansiveness and variety, but with Herzog's style (299). The trials and betrayals that Herzog endures, his obsessive concern with death at the opening of the novel, the death sentence he receives from Madeleine's eyes, these run a close parallel to the mainstream ideas about the death of the novel, character, tradition, etc. And what could be more appropriate for a whole literary tradition facing a death sentence, but intent on survival, than to represent it as of Jewish descent? Herzog's culpability in his own downfall runs a close parallel to the participation of novelists in devising aesthetics undermining the validity of their work, constructing an image of the literary writer as a creature unlike all other human beings, writing automatically without any self-direction, selection, or thought.

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[1] See Keith Opdahl, "'Stillness in the Midst of Chaos': Plot in the Novels of Saul Bellow" in the special issue on Saul Bellow in *Modern Fiction Studies* for a discussion of Bellow's difficulties with plot organization and an outline of the plot in *Herzog* as a development of the conflict between "the mess of [Herzog's] private life -- which he'd romantically hoped to make exemplary -- to a faith in the public realm" (19).

Certain observations seem no less relevant to the contemporary situation of the novel than to the surface context. A particularly good example of a comment that seems more than a little peculiar is: "Did I really believe that I would die when thinking stopped?" (265). This notion sticks out as odd and makes more sense as a comment on the relationship between the banishment of critical thought from the novel and its death announcement than it does on Herzog as a character. Another observation seems slipped in and altogether out of context to the preceding, but in particular the succeeding, sentences: *"I was somewhat bothered by borrowings and references which I considered 'hit and run,' or the use of other writers' serious beliefs as mere metaphors. For instance, I liked the section called 'Interpretations of Suffering' and also the one called 'Toward a Theory of Boredom.' This was an excellent piece of research"* (316, my emphasis). There is no "for instance" relationship between these sentences but the incongruity serves to call attention to the meaning of a sentence that makes perfect sense as a pointed message from a literary writer to critics, expressing resentment at seeing the meaning of his work ignored.

The very structural arrangement of *Herzog* reenacts the revival of the the novel, as well as the concerns and values that gave birth to the novel. The historical periods Bellow evokes in the opening and the closing of the frame are also significant. Herzog's retreat to the distinctly Romantic setting in Ludeyville for a "weirdly tranquil" recollection which results in a 'rebirth' in a setting which evokes the Enlightenment, the era to which belong the rise of the novel (and both the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and *L' Encyclopédie)*, of the middle class, of democracy, of America (2). Thus the opening takes Herzog's or the novel's pilgrimage back to its beginning (or perhaps more precisely, brings back the beginning for Herzog and the novel). Although I have separated the allegorical aspect of Bellow's use of the quest as pilgrimage from other aspects of his plot development, it is a part of the signification of the remarkable twists and turns that contribute greatly to the readability of the novel.

Herzog divides into nine unnumbered chapters. Bellow uses the two basic organizational devices of mystery (Barthes' hermeneutic code) and suspense (Barthes' proairetic code) to arouse and maintain the reader's interest in the unfolding of the story. In the first chapter of *Herzog*, Bellow prepares the ground for both mystery and suspense. In the three successive chapters, he uses mystery as the main, suspense as the peripheral, organizing principle. Chapter five is a transition from an emphasis on mystery to that of suspense. In the three successive chapters, Bellow uses suspense as the main, mystery as the peripheral, organizing principle. In the final chapter he employs *peripeteia* by reinvoking mystery and suspense on different terms.

Before examining Bellow's plot development in greater detail, I find it worthwhile to briefly mention plot definitions by two pioneers in the study of the English novel. In *The Craft of Fiction* Percy Lubbock pointed out that the modern novel at times called for a different definition of plot than the traditional one; instead of relying upon action, modern novelists like James tapped the dramatic possibilities of consciousness, whereby the "activity" of "recollections" becomes the "action" (125). Somewhere along the way Lubbock's definition seems to have metamorphosed into its opposite, through a cancellation of the key word "activity," leaving only "action." E. M. Forster's *The Aspects of the Novel* is likewise quoted in support of the idea that "what happens next?" is the only thing that counts. Forster emphasizes that story, whose defining features are suspense and grounding in time, is the principal element in any narrative. But Forster also classifies sheer "suspense" as peculiar to the caveman's narrative and points out that Aristotle's emphasis on "action" serves to define drama, not the novel (41, 85). He stresses that the novel requires attention to the plot's mystery, freedom from time, and selection of value; "A plot cannot be told to a gaping audience of cave-men or to a tyrannical sultan or to their modern descendant the movie-public. They can only be kept awake by 'And then -- and then --' they can only supply curiosity. But a plot demands intelligence and memory also" (87). Forster's distinction between story and plot is not as vague and inferior to the Russian Formalist distinction between *fabula* and *sjuzet* and structuralist precision as most references to him indicate by selecting his description of plot as the addition of causality to story as his main contribution to plot definition. Forster's vivid description of plot so appropriately captures Bellow's subtext on the emphasis on action in the novel that it may very well have figured in his play with organizational elements, only Bellow goes beyond the rough definition of mystery and suspense.

Mystery, detection, romance, horror, suspense, thriller, surprise ending -- commonly used to define commercial or sensational genres -- all of these figure in an important way in Bellow's immensely complex and interconnected plot development. He keeps the structural pattern of Herzog's journey, pilgrimage, in view throughout the narrative; Herzog travels by taxi, by train, by airplane, on foot, except in chapter four where his stasis by his desk in New York is in counterpoint to his journey back in time, and in the Ludeyville frame where his movement winds down to a rest. There are traces of the picaresque novel in Bellow's combination of episodic scenes and the journey motif, modified by the organization of *Bildung*.

Bellow establishes all the plot variants that he spins out in the narrative of *Herzog* in the first chapter and keeps them active in some way throughout the book, with the emphasis shifting from one variant to another. Although Bellow makes full use of the effects of mystery, detection, romance, suspense, thrill, he also uses them ironically to parody the emphases in contemporary values, in society and in literature. He plays these organizational elements against the more visible modernist, realist, epistolary, Romantic, transcendental, and satiric narrative elements which, each in their own way, serve to capture an aspect of human reality.

The opening of *Herzog*, startling and mystifying, cannot but raise questions and the first few pages suggest the possibilities that the narrative is going to be a Gothic mystery of possession by an evil spirit or madness, some kind of horror story, a murder mystery, or all three. The mystery of human nature, life and death also figure. Herzog's disjunctive notes and thoughts reinforce these possibilities:

> Death -- die -- live again -- die again -- live. No person, no death. ... I see by Walter Winchell that J. S. Bach put on black gloves to compose a requiem mass. I cannot justify ... Grief, Sir, is a species of idleness. ... Not that long disease, my life, but that long convalescence, my life. The liberal -- bourgeois revision, the illusion of improvement, the poison of

> hope. He thought awhile of Mithridates, whose system learned to thrive on poison. He cheated his assasins, who made the mistake of using small doses, and was pickled, not destroyed. Tutto fa brodo. (3, 4)

Madeleine "had tried to do *him* in," we learn immediately after the dark ruminations upon poison and there is the teasing possibility that he might have reciprocated and succeeded; after all, "his sexual powers had been damaged by Madeleine" and "[i]t was now becoming clear to Herzog, himself incapable of making plans, how well Madeleine had prepared to get rid of him" (4, 7). Herzog's life still seems to be in danger and there is the possibility that the reference to poisoning that pickles applies to him -- that someone has been poisoning him for a good while to no effect: "He had more enemies and hatreds than anyone could easily guess from his thoughtful expression"; "You have to fight for your life" (18, 19).

But other statements in the first chapter run counter to the hints of mystery, horror, madness, and murder without negating them. There is a note of levity, whimsy, in the narration and in Herzog. But this might be a sign of madness. Herzog reassures himself that even if he is "narcissistic," masochistic," "anachronistic," and "depressive," he is "not a manic depressive. There were worse cripples around" (4). He is not "spectacularly sick," indeed not sick at all, nor is he "exceptionally blind, extraordinarily degraded"; his "intellect" is good but not of the "aggressive paranoid character, eager for power"; and even if "jealous" he is not "exceptionally competitive" (4). Ramona is busy not only mending Herzog's damaged "sexual powers" but advancing their employment with the skill of a "sexual professional (or priestess)"; only, Herzog has ambivalent feelings about her desire for marriage (17-18). Herzog is not even *"greatly impressed with [his] own tortured heart"* (17). Thus the first chapter offers meagre explanations of Herzog's obvious and excessive distress, his compulsive return to death. When Herzog wonders what could be "the secret goal of [his] vague pilgrimage," he momentarily entertains but dismisses the possibility that it could be the orgiastic quest of "[a] petit bourgeois Dionysian," leaving his "pilgrimage" undefined (17). But each successive chapter defines the direction that his quest has taken until his retreat to Ludeyville.

Bellow develops the strains of his plot in ironic contrapuntal movements; he motivates Herzog's analytical, questioning activity in chapters two through five by raising questions. Detection motivates and shapes chapters two and three. In chapter two Herzog uncovers the manifold conspiracy against him like a detective, belatedly acting upon Madeleine's accusation that he hired "a private detective to spy on her" (55). Herzog gradually uncovers information that promises to provide relevant answers to the questions raised by his statements in the opening of the chapter: *"He* could not allow himself to die yet. The children needed him. His duty was to live. To be sane, and to live, and to look after the kids" (27). In the first chapter Herzog mentions that Gersbach is Madeleine's "lover" -- that she is, like "all women," "mad" about Gersbach -- early in chapter two he mentions their "affair" but not until in his letter to Zelda does Herzog reveal that the affair started before rather than after the divorce; that he was *"a deceived husband,"* as well as a deceiving husband "while [they] still were married" (5, 19, 30, 35, 39). Finally he fully and abruptly introduces Asphalter's revelation: *"I now know the whole funny, nasty, perverted truth about Madeleine. Much to think about"* (42). Having by then revealed Himmelstein's attempts to get him committed as insane, Herzog proceeds to uncover his psychiatrist's unprofessional implication in his client's betrayal and Gersbach's abuse of their friendship.

Detection is also the strategy that motivates the narrative in chapter three but in a significantly different sense. Herzog's detective work in chapter two uncovers his past failure to detect deceit but in chapter three he applies his capacity to detect false facades and truth. In both chapters Herzog's function is that of the *eiron.* In chapter two he himself in the past is the over-confident *alazon,* whereas in chapter three he detects and uncovers Shapiro's and Himmelstein's alazonic grip on reality, naming in Shapiro the "incredible bombast" that gives away the *alazon* (70). His detection, both in the sense of spying, in chapter two, and observing, in chapter three, also brings to the fore the *"traits of paranoia"* that keep resurfacing in Herzog through most of the narrative, even if he ascribes them specifically to Madeleine (77). In a letter to Governor Stevenson that opens the chapter and has an obvious reference to Shapiro and Himmelstein, Herzog starts by detecting American distrust of mental work, contrary to Emerson's faith that *"intellectuals [were] coming into their own" : "So things go on as before with those who think a great deal and effect nothing, and those who think nothing evidently doing it all"* (66). Bellow supplies a transition between Herzog's shift from spying upon himself and detecting others: "Herzog momentarily joined the objective world in looking down on himself. He too could smile at Herzog and despise him. But there still remained the fact. *I* am Herzog. I have to *be* that man. There is no one else to do it. After smiling, he must return to his own Self and see the thing through" (67). The leading question opening the chapter is: "Well, Herzog, what do you want?" (66). Bellow precedes the brief scenes with the Sisslers by having Herzog name what he wants and they have: the "desire to exist" which makes possible "happiness (*felicitas*)," the ability to "behave well (*bene agere*), or live well (*bene vivere*)" (96). Herzog's capacity to detect the discrepancies and destructiveness of Shapiro's and Himmelstein's versions of reality provides an essential premise for the validity of his detection of the authenticity of the Sisslers' reality based on acceptance of themselves, acceptance of aging, and capacity to overcome the experience of pain and violence.

Romance shapes chapters four and five. Chivalric romance is the leading narrative principle in chapter four. Herzog opens his account of his attempts to save a lady in distress, and the whole world of ordinary human existence as well, with the promise of demonstrating to the priest who converted Madeleine to Catholicism *"what may happen, or actually does happen, when people want to save themselves from ... I suppose the word is nihilism.* Now then, what does happen? What actually did happen?" (103). Questions of why Nachman avoids Herzog in the street provide a transition from Herzog's adult to his childhood family life and motivates the narrative to the conclusion of the chapter. Bellow very subtly spins a thread through the preceding chapters that unites his and Madeleine's power battles with the tradition of chivalric romance. Herzog's question as to what he wants in the third chapter picks up the thread from chapter one when he mentions his "vague pilgrimage" and chapter two when he confesses that he: *"Will never understand what women want. What do they want? They eat green salad and drink human blood"* (17, 41-42). "What thing it is that wommen most desiren" was indeed the question that the knight at king Arthur's court had to discover within "A twelfmonth and a day" or forfeit his life, in punishment for his rape, in the "Tale" told by the Wife of Bath during the pilgrimage in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.[2] The knight captures the key to his life, to happiness, and to his wife's release from her spell when, in response to her offer that he choose her day and night aspect, he returns the freedom of choice to her; freedom to set her own terms of existence, and freedom to govern. In return for freedom to choose and govern she vows to be "bothe fair and good" or "sterven wood," die mad, otherwise (146). The mutual give and take in the exchange between the knight and his wife is missing in Herzog's marriage to both Daisy and Madeleine; the one retreats into "heavy silence" after voicing "her objections each time -- once but not more," "with heavy neutrality" -- the other prefers rules (127). And the missionary zeal of the knight errants, Herzog, Mr. Idwal, and Nachman has more in common with the drive behind "'Romantics and Enthusiasts'" in Herzog's study than the human concern that directs the uproars in the Herzog family where give and take is a part of reality (127).

The most important contrast Bellow brings out in the structure of the chivalric quest is between chivalry in action and chivalry as an activity. Nachman's chivalric actions, parallelled by Herzog's, manifest the most pathetic ironic contrast to Chaucer's knight when distressed Laura "sterven wood" -- dies mad. By concluding the chapter with Herzog's recognition of Nachman's impulse to flee his own past, Bellow underscores the importance of the inward quest, the quest for the Holy Grail as an activity. Herzog may have squandered the *valuables* of his paternal inheritance on the house in Ludeyville but the family *values* remain buried in the past. Herzog in his journey to the past kills a few 'dragons' by directing the 'lance' of his "imagination also at [him]self, point-blank" and repossesses an unexpected treasure -- his inherited power to persevere in the face of betrayal and difficulties, and find hope despite adverse circumstances.

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[2] "From 'The Canterbury Tales,'" *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, The Major Authors, Gen. ed. M. H. Abrams, 5th ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1987) 79-181.

In chapter five Bellow shifts the romantic emphasis from the visionary to the emotional and physical, bringing to the forefront a thread spun through the narrative from chapter one. The element curiously missing in Herzog's marriages but prevalent in the scenes involving the Herzogs in the past is emotional commitment, central in chivalric romance of intimate relations and illicit affairs as well as in a number of fairy tales; continued in the commercial genre of contemporary romance (*Harlequin*, *Mills & Boon*, etc.). In chapter one Herzog notes: "His achievements were not only scholarly but sexual" (13). In chapter five he observes: "What a lot of romances! … One after another. Were those my real career?" (166). Bellow keeps the love interest in view in the intervening chapters with Herzog's ponderings whether marrying Ramona would be the best cure for his heartache and Herzog's childhood scenes provide a transition from the chivalric emphasis. The leading questions do not carry as much weight as in the preceding chapters and they serve to raise interest in Ramona's character and sense of values more than Herzog's dilemma: "why was Ramona so firm about wine?"; "what sort of mother would Ramona make?" (154, 160). Ramona, tired of playing the field, "had genuine family feeling and of this [Herzog] approved" (153).

Bellow centers all the advantages and disadvantages of love upon Ramona. She cares and provides for her aunt Tamara, she tends to Herzog's emotional, physical, and intellectual needs. But the sympathy her vulnerability stirs in him is too like his initial response to Madeleine; her sexual manipulation to make him say he belongs "[t]o [her] only" signals the danger of domination, and the ulterior motive of material and social advancement also figure: "'Every treasure is guarded by dragons'" (104, 187). Bellow's evocation of the commercial tradition of romance underpins the costs and returns of emotion and sexuality. The expansive, melting feeling of tenderness, brotherhood, love that Gersbach and Himmelstein have for Herzog, and that Herzog has for Ramona's aunt Tamara, as well as the masses at the underground station, is real enough -- and so are the sensual delights Sono offers Herzog. But emotion and sexuality without regard for the personal effort and dedication that it costs to cultivate love through action are the "cheapest forms" of love; Himmelstein fails to confirm his love for Herzog in practice -- Herzog fails to tend to Sono when she has lost her mother and when she is ill (176). Furthermore, the line between love and hate is fine. Herzog thinks about "the intimate design of the injury" of Madeleine and Gersbach's actions: "It's fascinating that hatred should be so personal as to be almost loving" (189).

Bellow employs the basic structure peculiar to fairy tales and commercial romance -- of decline followed by ascent, of emotional and sexual deprivation followed by fulfillment -- to signal a shift in the narrative from depth to surface, from mental activity to action. A phonecall from Ramona offering a romantic night for the romantic knight interrupts Herzog's quest into the past and opens the chapter. The narrative motivation also shifts from a backward to a forward pull as Bellow has Herzog anticipate his visit to Ramona by envisioning what will happen, raising interest in the accuracy of Herzog's prediction and the outcome of Ramona's "chase" of him (151). This chapter takes Herzog through Grand Central Station and is not only placed centrally in Bellow's chapter organization but addresses central issues. Anticipation of a romantic evening and an epic descent into the underworld carry the weight of the narrative motivation in this most sustainedly serious reflective chapter in *Herzog;* Herzog's ponderings on the inversion of transcendence into trans-descendence appropriately anticipate his descent into the New York underground and, in turn, foreshadow his encounter with the New York underworld in the following chapter. Herzog's most energetic playing of his intellectual lyre does carry quite a few truths from the world of shades, even if it only carries the shade of emotion in "communion," "brotherhood," which dissolves like Eurydice when Herzog looks at it (176). Herzog has the important insight that horror of death underlies the extreme desire for both transcendence and trans-descendence. An even more important recognition is that he carries "the shades" of the "dead" with him wherever he goes, as a part of his own underworld, "the Unconscious," -- be they the "great philosophers" of the collective Unconscious or "his own obscure dead" -- they not only heed his call, but play upon the strings of his memory without his conscious intervention (181, 1). But these are only a part of the accumulative patterning of Herzog's deepening understanding of contemporary reality and himself. In this chapter Bellow prepares for Herzog's testing through actions when Herzog notes: *"The power and completeness of all human systems must be continually tested, outwitted, at the risk of freedom, of life"* (177).

Bellow's preparation through sexual imagery in chapter five for the mounting excitement and rising action of the two successive chapters is playful, mischievous, without detracting from his emphasis on the value of sensuality. The demolition site Herzog passes on his way to Ramona's, the activity of mechanical demolition in the world of man-made objects, stands in sharp contrast to Herzog as man made Ramona's pleasure object and his recovery of his potency by her resurrection of his flesh. Not only does Herzog "rise from the dead" but "with him she experienced a real Easter. She knew what Resurrection was" (185). Sexuality interrupts Herzog's contemplation, comedy interrupts his and Ramona's inversion of the conventional sex-roles with him as the blushing maid, hiding beneath a shirt, her as the aggressor, pulling "him toward the bed" and assuming the dominant sexual position (204).

Bellow repeats these patterns of interruption in chapters six, seven, and eight as clashes between reality and make-believe. Herzog's almost operatic invective on Gersbach, to Simkin, comparing Gersbach's disruption of his life to "the French and Russian revolutions," clashes with yet complements his recollection of Madeleine's face when watching Gersbach's celebration of "the Chanukah" with a dance of joy and love with his son (215). Bellow variously stresses the similarity between the Dionysian spirit, Gersbach with his fiery red hair and ruddy face, and Fuzon, Blake's fiery spirit of freedom and rebellion who becomes Orc in Blake's "America: A Prophecy" in celebration of the French and the American revolutions for democracy. The contemporary aspect of this spirit of freedom is the energy he pours into "'[u]nlimited freedom to choose and play a tremendous variety of roles with a lot of coarse energy'" (216).

But Gersbach also has the power to free Madeleine's capacity for emotion. Herzog describes her when she watched Gersbach dance with Ephraim: "I might have guessed already, from Mady's look, that spurt of breath that came from her when she laughed spontaneously. That look was deep. Strange. A look like a steel binder bent open. She loves that actor" (219). Herzog's fanciful version of Gersbach as the unharnessed spirit of revolution, plundering the riches of Herzog's kingdom, his "Versailles," and the actual version of Gersbach giving the spark of life to Madeleine,without any conscious effort, contradict but complement each other as renderings of what happened between them. Furthermore, the actual version is remindful of the Prince awakening Sleeping Beauty. It brings to the forefront the fairy tale structure in the previous chapter, briefly evoked and cancelled in the opening of chapter six, when Herzog kisses Ramona in the cab on her way to work and again on the pavement in everyone's plain view, afterwards thinking that this might have been his kind of life "if he had been simply a loving creature" -- a frog that could metamorphose into a prince (206).

In chapter six, Bellow plays around with variations upon the structural pattern of rise and decline from chapter five. Herzog's phone conversation with Simkin, planning their meeting, establishes anticipation as the narrative motivation in the chapter. But instead of concluding the structure as expected, with a meeting determining whether Herzog will make a court case, Bellow introduces the element of coincidence -- the unexpected encounter between a cab driver who saw him kissing Ramona and thinks Herzog might be a detective -- and shifts the development of the plot into scenes that escalate from the pathetic to horror. As in chapters two and three, Bellow develops the discrepancy between illusion and reality, only in a more ironic way, testing out the validity of Shapiro's and Himmelstein's constructs of reality by uniting the thematic development of possession or madness, conning, and the concept of realism emphasized respectively in chapters one, two, and three. Herzog's uncontrolled escalation into verbal frenzy while talking to Simkin establishes the rising pattern repeated in mounting horror as the chapter proceeds. Herzog's excitement places in the foreground the element of Gothic mystery of possession, prevalent in chapter one but peripheral until Herzog identifies his excitement: "Herzog knew very well when he talked like this he was again in the grip of that eccentric, dangerous force that had been capturing him. It was at work now, and he felt himself bending. At any moment he might hear a crack" (216). Herzog's threats intensify the element of suspense as an aspect of the anticipation that motivates the chapter. Sandwiched between the two segments of rising tension, Bellow places two glimpses of decline. Decline is a part of human reality as in Polina's mental decline, senility, and in Sarah Herzog's physical decline and death. A particularly ironic variation is Aleck's apparent vision of himself as rising above the ordinary when he is in fact rapidly declining into an untimely grave. In the same manner, Bellow confirms but extensively modifies Himmelstein's version of reality as whorish and brutal, drawing a line between unnecessary and destructive pursuit of these human elements, and situations that cancel out the individual's freedom of choice.

The coincidental similarity between Madeleine's life and that of the young murderess in chapter six, establishes suspense as the prime narrative motivation in chapter seven. Bellow's preparation for the element of revenge in his plot development starts in chapter one by heavily indicating that Herzog has murdered Madeleine before retreating to Ludeyville and he keeps it peripheral enough to signify in the intervening chapters. In chapter two Herzog's letter to Zelda anticipates chapter seven:

> Of course if you considered me dangerous it was your duty to lie. ... You thought I might kill Mady and Valentine. But when I found out, why didn't I go to the pawnshop and buy a gun? Simpler yet, my father left a revolver in his desk. It's still there. But I'm no criminal, don't have it in me; frightful to myself instead. (41)

Despite Herzog's avowal that he does not have the capacity for murder in him, his enigmatic repetition of "unfinished business" in chapter three has decidedly sinister overtones (67, 98). The foreboding tone becomes all the more threatening when Herzog thinks to himself at the end of the chapter, having read Geraldine Portnoy's letter describing how she found June alone, crying and frightened, locked up in a car during a quarrel between Madeleine and Gersbach: "I'll kill him for that -- so help me if I don't" (101). A more mischievous reference to murder is Herzog's observation on Madeleine's constant interest in murder mysteries. In chapter five the parallel Bellow draws between Nachman and Herzog, as well as Herzog's earlier confession that his concern at Madeleine's possible madness was tinged with pleasure, raise the suspicion that he may eventually have caused her demise. This suspicion is less to the fore in chapter five but Herzog's ponderings at what kind of mother Ramona will make and that he "must take care of June" do open the possibility that he is making plans whereby June will need a new mother (194). Bellow picks up this thread and places it in the foreground in chapter six when Herzog says to Simkin: "'I often think, if she died I'd get my daughter back. There are times when I know I could look at Madeleine's corpse without pity'" (214). When Simkin eggs him on by saying "'They tried to murder you.... In a manner of speaking, they meant to," Herzog balks at being encouraged to say that he wants to kill Madeleine and Gersbach but thinks: "I've tested it in my mind with a gun, a knife, and felt no horror, no guilt. None. And I could never imagine such a crime before. So perhaps I might kill them" (214). Preparing to go to meet Simkin, Herzog thinks: "So now his rage is so great and deep, so murderous, bloody, positively rapturous, that his arms and fingers ache to strangle them. So much for his boyish purity of heart" (220).

In chapters seven and eight Bellow continues his variations upon the interchange between the structural pattern of expectation and that of the unexpected, established in chapter six, and closes some of the main patterns of narrative development. After taking such pains to build up suspense and after opening chapter seven with clear thriller signallings, Bellow eventually undermines the expectation that Herzog will kill Madeleine and Gersbach. Immediately before Herzog sets off with his father's gun in hand to settle his accounts, he recalls his father's intentions to kill him and recognizes that they were never more than idle threats, intended to startle a recalcitrant son awake to life. Herzog's failure to carry out his intention is therefore both expected and unexpected. Herzog's attempts to get Phoebe involved in a plot against her husband and her competitor for her husband's affections are in fact less expected but serve as counterpoint to Bellow's development of conspiracy, and her rejection of the idea provides its closure. Asphalter's exercise to accept death puts an unexpected slant on the quest for the meaning of life through confrontations with death. It also closes the structure of comedy used as positive interruption of theatrical self-dramatization. The opening of chapter eight, when June in her innocence reveals more than she should about her mother's relationship with Gersbach, and then checks herself with Herzog's approval, provides a closure on Herzog's activity of spying upon them, carried out in action when he peeks through their windows. By means of the unexpected, Herzog's crash with a German construct -- a car that painfully interrupts his thought -- after his lengthy clashes with German constructs of thought, Herzog has his most important battle and slays the dragon of domination. He uses his new-found insight into the futility of alternating between the meek role of the victim and the arrogant stance of the master during his interaction with the policemen he has to deal with after being arrested for illegal possession of fire arms. And during his encounter with Madeleine he allows her the free choice of admitting her affair with Gersbach; relying on her reluctance to admit to her subterfuge, Herzog allows her arrogance, her look demanding his annihilation, to belie her claims that she is a victim -- revealing to the observant policeman that her night and day aspects do not match. This encounter closes one strain of Bellow's use of romance as a structuring device. When Herzog's brother Will comes to his rescue, aiding a knight in distress, he closes another.

Bellow variously tests the ideas that the inner reality of modern man declines in proportion to his material rise and that acceptance of nastiness is acceptance of reality, introduced through Shapiro and Himmelstein, respectively. His final test of these ideas occurs during Will's visit in Ludeyville which closes yet another strand of Bellow's development of the quest. Herzog's detection of the different main characters, himself there included, has led him to equate the quest for social and material privileges with a loss of heart, in a rather open sense. Herzog worries that Will, rich and successful in the construction business, has lost his spirit -- that his show of wrath and rebellion has turned "[i]nto a certain poise and quiet humor, part decorousness, part (possibly) slavery" (328). Herzog discovers that Will may be partly a slave to his own material quest but it has not deprived him of the "sweet decency" he has in common with their sister Helen; nor does it blind him to the quality of the Ludeyville house and the surrounding trees when he notes that it will not sell for the money Herzog put in it because of its location; nor indeed do his materialistic pursuits stifle his emotional capacity: "I have something deep-in for you, too.... Just because I'm a contractor doesn't mean I can't understand what you mean" (332). Will is altogether realistic. But rather than determine value either on intrinsic or on extrinsic terms, he keeps an eye on both, acknowledging that although the one modifies the other, both count. The New York judge who steps beyond his role as allotter of punishment, trying to prevent further human damages, although "he must have done all that was necessary within the power structure to get appointed," is an intimation of the possibility that in order to excel in the rat-race, you do not necessarily have to be a brutal rat at heart (229). Will brings this point home on a personal level and provides an important stage in the closure of the pattern of paranoia, finalized when Herzog decides to pick flowers for Ramona, regardless of how she might interpret the gesture.

Most importantly, Bellow shifts the terms for mystery and suspense in his concluding chapter of *Herzog*. In his introduction of the structural motif of mystery in the opening chapter, Bellow leaves the signification of mystery fairly open. But in his plot development he sharpens the focus in different chapters upon different mystery structures: the detective plot, Gothic mystery, murder mystery. In the central chapter Ramona repeatedly calls to the surface the signification of the mystery of human nature by remarking how mysterious Madeleine and Gersbach are when Herzog recounts the odd twists his interaction with them has taken. Yet another element of mystery is at work throughout the narrative in the intimations of the transcendent beauty of nature as well as of the human environment that keep erupting into Herzog's consciousness in the least likely places and situations -- intimations of something greater than what is indicated by appearances alone.

Herzog notes the final results of his detective work upon the nature and roots of contemporary thought in his final letters. His findings suggest that the initial impetus for existentialism has been perverted in its application so that the desire to devise plans to make man lead a fuller life *in* reality rather than in flight *from* reality, into illusion, has been inverted into simply another kind of flight from reality, another kind of illusion. The mental activity of detective work can yield results that can be supported by evidence, like Herzog's on existentialism; it can provide evidence when there has been an actual murder, like in the case of the young mother who kills her own son. But detective work fails when there is no evidence; it cannot account for death *in* life because there is no dead body to prove that there was a death; it cannot provide evidence for the death nor the existence of God, faith. Gothic mystery comes closer to explaining the mysterious force that has Herzog in its grip in the final chapter, only, Gothic possession is an element that belongs exclusively to death as Herzog's murderous frenzy in chapters six and seven shows.

Herzog's mystical possession involves acceptance of the complex mystery of life as well as death and the structural movement of the final chapter underpins his steps toward this acceptance; of the chaotic mixture of life and death in the animal life that has taken over his house; of the mixture of error and insight in the ideas he has been struggling with; of his own capacity for both forgiveness and lasting grudges and spite; of the *"strange organization"* of the body that will die and of the *"intensity"* that intimates but cannot prove *"eternity"* (340). Bellow's organization in the final chapter records the stages of regeneration in a pattern that has perhaps more in common with the way the Mystery Plays are organized to celebrate creation and regeneration than the other types of mystery structures: Herzog's repossession of himself, of his house, of the present, of his senses -- his mystical experiences in his woods and in his lawn chair. Firmly entrenched in contemporary reality, however, Herzog does not claim the spiritual certainty of the Mystery Plays or of *Pilgrim's Progress* -- only the intimations that cannot be explained away. Throughout the narrative Bellow keeps in view the structural pattern of Herzog's journey, pilgrimage; Herzog travels by taxi, by train, by airplane, on foot, except in chapter four where his stasis by his desk in New York is in counterpoint to his journey back in time, and in the Ludeyville frame where his movement winds down to a rest. There are traces of the picaresque novel in Bellow's combination of episodic scenes and the journey motif, modified by the organization of *Bildung*. The novel ends with a perfect balance between suspense and mystery. But the suspense is not grounded in dread, anticipation of imminent death; it is suspense in anticipation of life, and the course his life will take is a mystery.

Realism and Action

Bellow's plot organization of his story (plot motivation being seen as peculiar to realism) shows a massive resistance to the contemporary understanding of the concept of realism and its capacity to correspond to human reality, the understanding that facts and action -- preferably violent or forceful -- in external reality -- preferably among the lower orders of society, or among the criminal elements -- define realism. First I will consider the socio-political implications of Bellow's exposure of this definition of realism which he has Himmelstein voice most succinctly. Ian Watt suggests in *The Rise of the Novel* that this understanding of realism arose from "critical associations of the term 'realism' [ ] with the French school of Realists" and "the 'low' subjects and allegedly immoral tendencies of Flaubert and his successors," whereby "'realism' came to be used primarily as the antonym for 'idealism'" (10). Marxist literary theory sharpened the political implications, the relevance to class.

As Bellow heavily underlines, this kind of realism leaves out more of reality in democratic Western societies than it includes. Realism as a concept implicitly claiming exclusive and exhaustive capacity to account for reality becomes a manifold and, to say the least, unattractive falsification of reality when defined in this narrow manner. First of all, as Bellow's structural management reveals, honest and actual opting out from bourgeoisie materialism, such as Nachman's, is highly chivalric, highly idealistic. In benevolence it yields less than technology bringing electric light and water to a village where there was none; but for the individual himself and for anyone who gets entangled in his quixotic pursuit it is most likely to be destructive. Secondly, as Bellow shows in his development of the chapter that brings the criminal elements, the lower orders of society, into focus, being trapped in a situation where your options have been reduced by social, situational, or genetic circumstances, has nothing glamorous about it; it is simply an aspect of horror. The people Herzog sees before the judges are not Himmelstein's jolly folk with hearts. They are as much victims as their legally defined victims. Thirdly, Himmelstein's claim to this layer of reality is somewhat understandable because it is reality as he sees it as a lawyer. But it is not his reality, only self-glorification upon questionalble terms because he himself does not have to live without options, without freedom to choose and act. Bellow brings out what he sees as the true nature of this type of realism, which defines reality as nasty, through his shift to the narrative motivation of a thriller in his development of the revenge plot when Herzog decides to act out Himmelstein's interpretation of realism.

By delaying action and by revealing as many facets of Herzog's dilemma as possible, Bellow reveals the complexity of reasons that underlie Herzog's desire for revenge. He leaves in no doubt that Herzog has been abysmally manipulated and misled by Madeleine and Gersbach -- but in part because he allows them. Madeleine notifies the police that Herzog is dangerous and is not to get near her house after their divorce, and tries to get him locked away in an insane asylum -- perhaps because he sends a telegram that reads: "Dirt Enters At the Heart. The first letters spell death" (216). Herzog darts off to Chicago to save June -- but June is not at all on his mind as he approaches the house, listing the reasons why he is justified in killing the lovers. Herzog was a cuckold -- but one unfaithful to his wife. Herzog's sense of self, of honour, has been damaged but, also, Gersbach finds love in the steel binder of Madeleine's heart, locked away from Herzog. Bellow's thematic development shows the complexities as well as the bottom line of Herzog's desire for revenge: he wants justice -- just treatment by others. Bellow's structural management, on the other hand, reinforces that Herzog's intention to kill the untrue lovers is not a way to restore justice but simply another injustice, a desire for absolute domination, tyranny, that has strong affinities with the tradition of the Revenge Tragedies -- a particularly melodramatic theatrical genre. As Herzog notes: "his intended violence turned into *theatre*, into something ludicrous" (258). The very idea to insist that something as excitingly melodramatic but altogether divorced from reality as Revenge Tragedies should serve as a paradigm for modern existence is indeed ludicrous, as Bellow indicates. Ian Watt notes in *The Rise of the Novel:* "If the novel were realistic merely because it saw life from the seamy side, it would only be an inverted romance; but in fact it surely attempts to portray all the varieties of human experience, and not merely those suited to one particular literary perspective: the novel's realism does not reside in the kind of life it presents but the way it presents it" (11). Bellow bares this inversion through Nachman, redefines it through Herzog, and altogether refuses to falsify or glorify the real pains and horrors of life on the seamy side through some form of conventional amelioration. In the scene of the murder trial in *Herzog*, the most realistic in the sense that Himmelstein uses the word, there is no passion and theatrics: "Such calm -- inversely proportionate to the murder" (237).

Bellow further challenges the concept of realism that insists on the nastiness of reality -- reality as a thriller -- by inscribing alternative realisms upon the various scenes and characters he depicts in *Herzog*. Shapiro's cultured self-presentation and the country estate setting evokes the realism of the Great Tradition; Bellow's depiction of what hides underneath the surface is more akin to the Darwinian naturalism of Frank Norris in *McTeague*. Himmelstein's construct of reality is basically that peculiar to *McTeague*, but Bellow's depiction of him is more like a cross between Dickens's melodrama and Dreiser's naturalism (I refer to specific authors to indicate in short-hand similarities in emphasis of delineation of character and scene -- not to indicate influence -- because it is Bellow's deliberate evocation of types of realistic presentation that matters). Herzog's brief visit with the Sisslers offers a glimpse of yet another kind of realism -- the kind that tends to be classified as amelioration because it shows ordinary people who have had their shares of problems and pain overcome them and find contentment and acceptance of themselves, regardless of marks of aging and encounters with violence and pain.[3] The scene of Madeleine and Gersbach that meets Herzog's spying eye would fall into the same category of realism.

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[3] The assumption that nastiness defines realism is evident, for instance, in Diane Johnson's review of Anne Tyler's *The Accidental Tourist*. Johnson accuses Tyler of amelioration in her novels: "These are in a sense Reaganesque dream novels, where the poor are deserving and spunkiness will win. In the real world of the newspapers people are brutalized, and killed in holdups. But perhaps it is tiresome in the reader to insist upon reality. After all we don't require it in our president. ... The great works of the past by their form console us for the harshness of human reality that they confront. But perhaps confrontation is not the national mood, and these books are of our times ("Southern Comfort," *The New York Review of Books*, Vol. 32, No. 17, November 7, 1985, 15-17.) Johnson's review raises the interesting question of to what extent the idea of general disintegration of human values is shaped by the media's preference for news of death, destruction, violence, and other human disasters. Johnson's *reality*, I suspect, hardly involves daily "confrontation" with brutalization, holdups, and killings.

The scenes and the character depiction in most of chapter four are of a kind likely to be encountered in traditional English realist novels which emphasize verisimilitude rather than stylization in character and setting. The scenes from Herzog's childhood, on the other hand, would substantiate Gerhard Bach's observation in "Saul Bellow and the Dialectic of Being Contemporary," in the *Saul Bellow Journal*, that "Bellow claims for himself the narrative tradition of nineteenth-century (Eastern) Europe" (3). Bellow's emphasis on sexuality and the body in the chapter on Sono and Ramona is Lawrentian; his emphasis on food -- exotic or exquisite -- is Peacockean, the sensuality Baroque. Keith Opdahl, in "True Impressions": Saul Bellow's Transcendental Vision," collected in *Saul Bellow and His Work*, compares Bellow to "the nineteenth century realists" in his "insist[ence] upon a moderate and even mixed truth" and compares Bellow to Henry James in his depiction of Herzog's ploy "to bring out the real Madeleine" in their final confrontation (68). Opdahl also finds in *Herzog* the 'right' kind of "concrete detail" to counteract Bellow's "love for the eccentric, extreme and visionary: "In *Herzog*, Bellow finds a way to contain the eccentric within the realistic context, having Herzog dash off his letters while sitting in a 'real' railway coach" (61, 69). In *The Novels of Saul Bellow*, Opdahl notes: "Bellow has been praised for his realistic description of the American city, but the most striking quality of his style is precisely his lack of literal realism. He continually equates the human and the inanimate"; Opdahl names the example where Herzog compares the tiles in his bathroom to the cells of a brain (20). Bellow's way of making the city, in particular, come alive is remindful of Dreiser. Nonetheless, *Herzog* fulfills the basic requirements Lukács sets in *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism* for social realism; that its "form" be "rooted in content" as "the specific form of a specific content" and that the "abstract potentiality" of the protagonist be made "concrete" by a fateful decision through "interaction of character and environment" (19, 23, 24). Herzog's decision is simply not to carry through the action he intended and -- here is where Bellow puts a mile between *Herzog* and Lukács' realism -- the most significant aspect of Herzog's narrative is his decision to retreat from social environment and sort through the implications of his experience. Herzog's most significant action is activity, his interaction with the human environment he carries within his subjective consciousness and the pleasure and peace he derives from the non-human environment in Ludeyville.

Bellow's use of realism in this brief summary has already overstepped conventional definitions of the boundaries of realism, but so do his various organizing strategies. Furthermore, despite seeming massive overload of detail and information in *Herzog*, I would hesitate to classify the various details that at first sight seem inconsequential as the type of redundancy Barthes specifies in "The Reality Effect" as peculiar to realism. At closer regard the details do not only create a "reality effect" to indicate "this is reality," as Barthes puts it, but they also add to the signification of the massive but closely knit text in the way Leitch describes narrative redundancy in my chapter three (141-48). Moreover, Bellow's disruptive use of language in *Herzog*, to recover as well as discover the actual ideological load that corresponds to specific words, and his recording in the linguistic surface of the novel of his narrative as well as thematic development -- these narrative elements would seem to place the novel more firmly within modernist discourse. But the aim that can be read out of Bellow's narrative management is not to write a text recognized on terms set by contemporary criticism as either realist or modernist; the textual aim is to expose and explode fictions about narrative. Through plot organization, in relation to his encyclopedic opening of the term 'realism,' Bellow explodes the fiction that there is strict mimetic correlation between contemporary reality and the contemporary understanding of realism -- the understanding that the reality of modern man is fallen and that realism therefore can only be brutal, nasty, in its depiction of the most vicious struggles between classes and individuals. The narrative in *Herzog* indicates that the mystery of human reality is too complex, too deep, too varied to be caught in one simple structure.

Each narrative structure corresponds to drives towards different goals controlled by the primary structure of the quest: detection or spying corresponds to search for hidden truth; romance corresponds to search for the fulfillment of ideal aims; revenge corresponds to search for justice; mystery corresponds to search for spiritual values and certainty. Herzog's quest is a pilgrimage -- a journey of pain and suffering in spiritual penance -- only insofar that the quest is manifested in the structurally named versions that slip away from their underlying aims and become sensational parodies of the search for truth, ideals, justice, and inner value. The narrative of *Herzog* challenges the assumption that the capacity of traditional realism and alternative narrative forms to capture contemporary historical reality has been exhausted and demonstrates that it is only a matter of rediscovering their relevance within the context of new conditions, of arranging them in a new way instead of passing off as new the old sensational forms and methods. Bellow's vignettes of alternative methods of depicting reality stress that the dominant concept of realism has banished pleasure and emotive reality in favour of pain and struggle, cognitive reality in favour of unbridled passion to dominate (the concept 'class struggle' in particular brings domination to the fore because in that particular struggle the understood aim is to gain the upper hand). By the time of Bellow's writing of *Herzog*, modernism, once new, had ceased to be new as commentary on *Herzog* amptly demonstrates. The subjectivity of modernism was considered suspect -- divorced from reality. As Bellow demonstrates in his formal management, modernism draws upon the tradition of subjective narrative, much as new forms of realism do upon utterly conventional popular traditions. But Bellow affirms that modernism enriched the tradition as well with discoveries and rediscoveries of ways to depict the subjectivity of experience, of reality.

Continuity and Interruption

In his organization of narrative perspective, voice, and time as well as in his shaping of the narrative, Bellow sets up a dialogue between modernism and tradition. The modernist aspects of the narrative of *Herzog* capture the facets of being, the interchange between memory and largely unconscious drives that not only precede and determine action, but process and evaluate the implications of actions, not necessarily by rational means. In his narrative form and its ordering Bellow combines the narrative methods peculiar to the two different trends in modernism that Virginia Woolf likened to "the butterfly" or "the artist," as opposed to "the gadfly" or "the reformer," in her essay "Women and Fiction" in *Collected Essays: II Virginia Woolf* (147). The use of a focalizer, center of consciousness, was peculiar to early modernism, introduced into the English novel from the French by Henry James, but first person narration gradually became dominant with increased emphasis on psychologically rather than historically and socially conditioned verisimilitude.[4] In *The Technique of Modern Fiction*, published in 1968, Jonathan Raban describes the latter as "the point of view … of the sensitive, and usually suffering, hero" and adds: "The modern English and American novel has proliferated into a large number of private, subjective worlds. A random count of novels published since 1920 would, I think, reveal a disproportionately frequent use of first-person and single character narration" (35). Bellow revives the polemic capacity of early modernist narrative in a most interesting and meaningful manner by approximating monologue through Herzog as a hermeneutic focalizer, by carefully managing narrative disruption, and by shifting the placement of the circular frame which usually closes the narrative that it opens.

Focalization, as James pointed out in his commentary on *The Ambassadors*, has the double advantage of allowing full access to the protagonist's consciousness yet it also shows him from the outside on equal footing with other characters and thus provides stronger grounds for a critical reading than first person narration. But rather than use a choral character like Gostrey, as James does to challenge Strether's value system and make the past immediately relevant to the present, Bellow uses disruption of the time scheme of the narration to set up a dialogic interaction between two different ways of viewing and interpreting the world, within one character. Instead of using the dialectic interaction between the values of two separate characters, Bellow has Herzog in Ludeyville remember and question himself as he questioned the values and ideas of himself and others in New York. There is the perspective and voice of inner Herzog and of Herzog taking an external view of himself, questioning and explaining in the manner of the traditional authorial narrator; there is the perspective of Herzog of the past as it differs from that of Herzog of the narrative present. As Cohen notes in her study, Herzog repeatedly catches himself preening in front of a mirror, embarrassed at his own vanity but deriving idiotic pleasure from observing his own body and tending to its needs. And when Herzog observes the trials at the New York court, his inner distress at the scenes he encounters stands in sharp contrast to his elegant "composure, of charm and sympathy" (230). It is Herzog himself who recognizes that his innate style and stylishness stand in sharply ironic contrast to the human reality around him and he calls attention to his own hypocrisy, interpreting its significance: "'… there ain't no flies on Jesus.' A man who looked so fine and humane would be outside police jurisdiction, immune to lower forms of suffering and punishment" (230). The ironic potential of multiple points of view, evident for instance in Woolf's depiction of the different ways characters perceive the same situation in *Mrs. Dalloway*, is made even more acute in Bellow's use of a split perspective when Herzog views himself in the past.

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[4] See F. K. Stanzel in *A Theory of Narrative* and Wallace Martin in *Recent Theories of Fiction*.

Bellow's achronological ordering of the narrative allows for instances of intense dramatic irony which bring home Herzog's persistent self-delusion in the past. The contrast between Herzog's intellectual aspirations to save the ordinary with a transcendental revival, "renewing universal connections," and his failure to make the right connections in his personal life, to detect what was going on under his very nose is devastatingly ironic (39). Some pages after Luke Asphalter's revelation of the affair of some years between Madeleine and Gersbach, Herzog recalls a conversation between himself and Gersbach where he either failed to detect or failed to acknowledge Gersbach's signs of jealousy. Gersbach's misuse of *"[b]erimmter"* which he turns into *"ferimmter,"* Herzog, "to save his soul could not let [ ] pass" (61). But Herzog fails to pursue the verbal peculiarity of Gersbach's persistent questions whether Herzog "tr[ied] anything," made "a pass" at his own wife, as well as of Gersbach's magnanimous words of forgiveness upon learning that Herzog not only made "a pass" but that he and Madeleine "had intercourse the night before": "There's nothing -- nothing! -- you could do to shake my friendship ... I can take what you've done to me" (60). Gersbach's avowal that Herzog and Madeleine "are the two people [he] love[s] most" and Himmelstein's "I love you better than my own effing family," before he turns around and tries to get Herzog committed to an insane asylum, are likewise undercut by dramatic irony due to previous information (59, 90). Because of the double view provided by Herzog's hindsight, the verbal and the situational irony in these instances is clear to Herzog as well as to the reader.

On the one hand Bellow orders narrative events in chronological, sequential, causal continuity and on the other he interrupts such continuity. A careful reading will reveal that the narrative present, a week in Ludeyville, frames another time-plane of four days summarized in the first page of the novel. The main story enclosed within the frame is ordered chronologically and outlined in the opening: Herzog went "from New York to Martha's Vineyard, but returned from the Vineyard immediately; two days later he flew to Chicago, and from Chicago he went to" Ludeyville (1). The chronological account is ordered sequentially by cause and effect; Herzog does not feel at ease in Martha's Vineyard so he flies back to New York, but worries about his daughter and thirst for revenge take him to Chicago. However, Herzog's recollections of more distant events are introduced by association, as in stream-of-consciousness. An example is his letter to Nachman, who had avoided Herzog a few days earlier by running away, which first evokes memories of an earlier encounter with him in Paris and then another in America. Then Herzog recalls Nachman's uncle Ravitch who boardered with the Herzogs, and eventually brings up family scenes from his own childhood. The narrative layers of different time schemes in *Herzog* capture the timelessness of the mind, the play of memory, its freedom to range and soar beyond the historical present, at the same time as they accommodate and order Herzog's dialogue with his past. And there is no need to minimize Bellow's disruption of the reader's ability to establish chronological continuity, even if there is continuity submerged in the framed narrative. Allen Guttman, noting in "Saul Bellow's Humane Comedy" Bellow's "familiarity with the tradition of modernism," says that "[t]o understand *what* happened to Moses Herzog is in itself a difficult enterprise": "The justification of his acceptance of self is technically complicated by flashbacks, swift transitions in time and in topic, and the digressive opportunities of the epistolary form" (142).[5]

Herzog's notes and letters have a structural and rhetorical function beyond the immediately obvious one of providing "digressive opportunities" to open a debate on past and contemporary ideas. In the chapters of *Herzog* where there is hardly any action, the interruption of notes and letters provides movement. The scuttling of Herzog's mind through history, through society, the abrupt shifts from one topic to another, from one unlikely addressee to another, keep up an incredible narrative pace that never lags despite the lack of action. Furthermore, by aligning traditional elements with modernism Bellow calls attention to the continuity of tradition and the possibility of recapturing some of the older metaphysical values on terms set by the modern condition.

The interruption of the narrative with notes has the effect of arousing curiosity, a desire to solve the enigma of their significance, and their initial disjunctiveness also brings home Herzog's utter confusion and possible madness. The epiphanies in the opening of *Herzog* contribute to Bellow's initial foregrounding of modernist techniques, but as they continue scattered through the narrative, they tend towards the double voicedness of irony: *"A strange heart. I myself can't account for it"* ; *"Lord, I ran to fight in Thy Holy cause, but kept tripping, never reached the scene of the struggle"* (14, 128). Epiphanic insight that takes the form of punning upon proverbs and aphorisms in *Herzog* invites the view that epiphanies are in fact a variation upon aphorisms, a shift from generally applicable insight delivered by a narrator in the traditional novel, to personal insight, yet of universal value, delivered by a character in the modern. "A bitch in time breeds contempt"; "Hitch your agony to a star"; in a comic way these indicate Herzog's disillusionment and bitterness but at the same time they suggest that old adages no longer hold and that modern man has inverted transcendental optimism into "trans-descendence" (21, 16).

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[5] Guttman undoes "the tangled skein and summarize[s] in a paragraph the events that Bellow is at such pains to scramble" (142). Born, Montreal, ca. 1917; moves to Chicago; graduates ca. 1938; service in W.W.II; Ph.D. ca. 1950; marries Daisy, Marco born, publishes *Romanticism and Christianity* ca. 1954; divorce, marries Madeleine, moves to Berkshires ca. 1956; June born ca. 1959; moves to Chicago ca. 1962; divorce fall 1963; travels in Europe winter; confusion spring; stability summer 1964 (142-43).

In the fragmented thoughts in the first notes, Bellow adopts modernist disruption of language to indicate the surge of largely unconscious drives that determine thought and action, and at the same time they serve to introduce the main ideas and themes. Death, life, selfhood, loss of self are the themes that the first notes introduce. *"Death -- die -- live again -- die again -- live"* suggests Herzog's need to confront death and life directly in the hope for survival (3). *"No person, no death,"* on the other hand, suggests Herzog's desire for flight, his temptation to admit total defeat, but also pointedly underlines that nihilism is an illogical escape route from fear of death (3). "I see by Walter Winchell that J. S. Bach put on black gloves to compose a requiem mass" identifies the approach to death that Herzog has customarily adopted; to treat it with abstract "gloves," as an idea, as if fearing contagion (3). "And, *On the knees of your soul? Might as well be useful. Scrub the floor"* introduces Bellow's development of the argument that some of the ideological rubbish needs clearing out, as well as the thematic and narrative elements of the value of laughter as the means to survive the indignities of life, the fear of death -- as the means of spiritual *catharsis* (3). Folly and the demand for schismatic selection appears in an echo from Blake's "Heaven and Hell": *"Answer a fool according to his folly lest he be wise in his own conceit. Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou be like unto him. Choose one"* (3). Unlike Milton, Herzog *"cannot justify"* his own ways -- let alone the "ways of God to men" -- but justice he wants (3). The notes in particular record the structural pattern of Herzog's initial lack of equilibrium, his total lack of it during his spell of nausea, and his recovery of equilibrium. By the end of the narrative Herzog has scrubbed the floor of his soul, Mrs. Tuttle is busy scrubbing that of his house, and Herzog has decided to "live again" -- "live."

Like Herzog's notes, his letters underscore historical continuity in literature. Bellow's ordering of his narrative makes obvious the parallel between Herzog's personal situation and the issues he addresses in his letters. Herzog's letter to the president expressing worry that higher taxes will increase *"automation"* and exacerbate the collective crime of *"adolescent gangs"* corresponds to his feelings of having his trust abused, of having been used as an automatic object, as an "*It*" instead of an "*I*" (49, 64). Herzog's emotional response to Dr. Edvig's part in distracting him from the most serious problem in his marriage is also evident in his expressed worries in a letter to the *New York Times* about *"the social and ethical reasoning of scientists"* who divert people's attention from serious risks of destruction (49). His example is Dr. Teller who *"argued that ... tight pants"* could cause more genetic damage than radioactivity (49). Herzog's gradual unfolding of Madeleine's way of involving their family, friends, and psychiatrist in attempts to disregard or even annul him as a rational human being has an obvious connection to his expression of worry at the "*Philosophy of Risk*" whereby *"collective and organizational crime has the object precisely of reducing risk"* (50). By combining in Herzog's letters the tradition of a sensibility under duress, labouring against a conspiracy, and the public address of the morally responsible citizen, Bellow establishes an ironic connection between modernist subjectivity, the subjectivity of the epistolary tradition in the novel, and the assumed public objectivity of the Man of Letters. Although entirely appropriate, this combination is highly unusual; because Bellow emphasizes through his parallel narrative development the unconscious drives of personal concerns that motivate the intellectuality and polemics of the public address, the letters mark the state of Herzog's sensibilities.

Furthermore, the letters contribute to the polyphony of voices that resound in Herzog's memory and disprove that a subjective narrative lacks Otherness. Each recalled voice from Herzog's personal life is distinct with its own register of language, each distinct with its own set of values, ideas, and placement in the social hierarchy, by choice or by necessity. In his letters Herzog quotes the language of the various academic and scientific disciplines, of civil rights, of politics, of bureaucracy, of law, to count a few. Each voice, each level of language, values, and manner of approaching the world, in some manner modifies or compliments Herzog's personal voice; the manner of speaking is as significant as what is said. Herzog's consciousness is a battleground of Others -- Heidegger, Freud, Emerson, Proudhon, Pope, politicians, scientists, academics, to name a few -- whose values and opinions he has amassed through his education as a specialist in intellectual history, as well as through his own personal experience. Herzog does not need so much to put a check on *his* thoughts as he needs to put a check upon the thoughts of *others* which obscure his own. Except in the first few and the last letters, Herzog is in command, undermining the Other in the manner of the *eiron*, pontificating, overbearing, in the manner of the *alazon*, but always superior, irreverent, full of dazzling wit, satiric grace, and insight. In the last letters he is sincere and on equal rather than superior footing with the specters of past and present -- except in the final letter, to God, where he is simply a man addressing the unknowable but awesome. The letters have the same structural function as the notes, to record recovered equilibrium, but they also establish a hierarchy of values and power.

In his use of a narrative frame, Bellow keeps intact the conventional modernist function of the circular closure but instead of using it to close the narrative he employs it to conclude a state of being. For instance in Woolf's graceful use of the waves against the horizon that marks the stages in life in her poetic rendering of life from youth to death in *The Waves*, the frame provides an appropriate but rather enigmatic closure which balances the finality of death against the eternity of the waves, indicating that the basic patterns outlined in the narrative recur endlessly. Bellow repeats the opening sentence of *Herzog*, "If I am out of my mind, it's all right with me, thought Moses Herzog," in the concluding chapter, marked off with an indentation as if it were a paragraph: "But if I am out of my mind, it's all right with me" (1, 315). The minor changes leave it unclear whether the two instances record the same thought but the references to approaching evening and Herzog's mattress in both cases reinforce that possibility. In the conclusion it is clear that Herzog's acceptance of being out of his mind occurs on his first day at Ludeyville, but more importantly, the sentence occurs immediately before his good-bye letters, to Professor Mermelstein who scooped him and to whom Herzog offers the notes and drafts that never became a book, to Madeleine and Gersbach, and to Nietzsche. Whether or not the two sentences record the same thought is less important than their function as an opening and closing motif for a chapter in Herzog's life, indicating finality in the sense of marking a stage of growth as the second sentence precedes his eventual self-acceptance and discovery that "the spell" is broken (341). Death often serves as the final closure in traditional narrative as well as in modernist texts such as William Styron's *Lie Down in Darkness* and that is how Bellow uses the motif sentences. But circular closure such as Woolf's interrupts the finality of death with a hint of cyclical continuity. Bellow shifts from the structural closure to the very end of the narrative the signal of enigmatic continuity which leaves open the possibility of a similar but not the same cycle of events; the "bitter cup" that will "come round again" (326). Yet he reinterprets the meaning of the framing motif in the very last sentences where Herzog is out of his mind in the sense that he is no longer busy thinking, worrying, sending out messages; out of mind but into existence, being.

In *Herzog* Bellow amply demonstrates that modernist narrative techniques do not preclude traditional or other possibilities. Bellow's method of dislocating the meaning of narrative conventions and language is comic, ironic, satiric, and serves to interrupt modernist methods of interruption while affirming their narrative value. Focalization can keep within the "compass" of a single character, as James put it, and remain so faithful to that single vision that it amounts to monologue, yet simultaneously sweep through the whole social range to let in alternative voices, views, values, angles on the world in the manner of Henry Fielding, or Charles Dickens. The opposition of an Other, the dramatic conflict, need not arise from the mutually exclusive options of the character's clash with his society, or his cultural heritage, or his antagonist other, or with himself; the conflict can be all in one. A causally arranged narrative does not have to overwhelm the effect of a consciousness streaming and darting from one thing to another by association rather than sequence in time and space. And Baroque satire, alternately celebrating the idiotic pleasures of the body and ridiculing its capacity as a vehicle for affectation, but above all insisting that its existence be not forgotten, can easily fit within the technique of focalization, more commonly associated with subtle irony, such as James', pointed but essentially serious irony, such as Conrad's, or acerbic irony, such as Sartre's. Also, achronological narration provides ample opportunity for dramatic irony without losing its capacity to imitate the mind's movement, free in time and space. And circular narrative closure to mark the stage of death of a self can at the same time mark the stage of birth of a more complete self. Bellow's intent is clearly to interrupt false schisms and false assumptions about the narrative tradition. He shows that new techniques can add old tricks to their repertoire without sacrificing the valuable function of the new and that modernist narrative methods allow a wide margin for realistic objectivity within the subjective perspective, unlike the kind of realism that relies entirely upon different forms of sensationalism.

Rhetoric and Literary Persuasion: The Battle of the Books

Bellow's most important and most ingenious game plan in his play of narrative persuasion is to work out through rhetorical organization a gradual build-up to a battle between opponents in the surface structure and simultaneously conduct a Battle of the Books between the surface structure and the deep structure. Neither the rhetorically organized battle nor the Battle of the Books comes to a logical conclusion. Bellow conducts and resolves the Battle of the Books through allusions and symbols which unite his rhetorical development through content and form -- his persuasion that traditional values not only need to be reformulated within the contemporary cultural context but can be reformulated to set more harmonious, humane, life-giving terms for literary depiction of human existence: by the means of selection rather than by simple synthesis.

Chapters one and two introduce and define Herzog's problem of having been badly betrayed. Chapters three, four, and five analyze in progressively minute detail why and how the betrayal happened. Chapters six, seven, and eight test different solutions to the problem: respectively, a legal battle which Herzog has no chance of winning, a gun battle which he has no chance of losing because the enemy is unarmed and unsuspecting, and a battle of logic where there is perhaps no victor, more a finalization of Herzog and Madeleine's divorce. But Madeleine is not the only traitor. Herzog also has to settle accounts with his cultural heritage: the values he grew up with in relation to the intellectual values that grew upon him, a battle conducted through mental notes and letters. Herzog brings this battle to a conclusion in the final chapter by rhetorical means; only, rather than either refuting or affirming the validity of the opposition, Herzog accepts that initial intention behind nihilism as moral even if he rejects the outcome as devaluation of all human values. The main traitor still remains: Herzog himself. Having tried and found himself guilty in the first chapter, a punishment seems the most logical conclusion to his treatment of himself as an enemy. Instead Herzog makes friends with his own "devil" -- fear of death, mutability, which has debarred him from enjoying his own being in the present -- but not by the means of logic or rhetoric; something simply happens within him and he is at peace with himself. This level of warfare is immediately accessible in the surface structure.

Bellow works out his most important rhetorical and organizing strategy through the battle between the Books he identifies and analyzes in the surface structure and the Books he identifies and draws upon through the deep structure. The Books Bellow acknowledges in the very surface of the narrative and alludes to variously in the deep structure are theoretical: philosophical, political, sociological, theological, historical, and so forth. The Books he identifies in particular in the deep structure, by allusion rather than through explicit acknowledgement, are predominantly literary. The Books identified at the two different levels conduct a Battle between them on the issue of human value and human values: spiritual, philosophical, literary, democratic. The few literary allusions which Bellow identifies by author in the surface structure serve to comment on rationalism. Pope's "On the Collar of a Dog" identifies rationalism as inherently tyrannical and Shelley's "Ozymandias" subtly affirms the supremacy of man's creative faculties by noting how Time dismantles all tyrannical constructs, whereas creative constructs will capture and preserve the distorted visage of the tyrant and outlast him in time. The whole text of *Herzog* resounds with literary allusions but three authors in particular participate in the literary Battle: Whitman, Blake, and above all Swift, who each in his own way resisted rationalism and so defines the terms for its opposition in Bellow's narrative. The central symbol of a web unites all the different threads Bellow develops in content and form and the Battle of the Books centers on the host of issues relating to material and transcendent reality represented by the web. Bellow manages his thematic and formal resolution through a dismantling of the image of the web and the Battle it represents, and a reconstruction by means of symbols which are parallel to the web in meaning but do not carry its negative cultural connotations.

The literary opposition in *Herzog* represents an extremely optimistic as opposed to an extremely pessimistic view of man. Bellow plays Nietzsche's idea of eternal return against the motif of possession by a mysterious epistolary spirit by reanimating in Herzog the spirit of Swift, considered by many the ultimate misanthrope of Old World and New alike. Swift's contender for the possession of or rebirth in Herzog is America's most expansive optimist Walt Whitman. A third figure from the literary past sets the terms for the Battle: Blake with his argument in "Heaven and Hell" that the opposition of good and evil is not to be resolved but reexamined, values fallaciously allotted to Hell recovered, values fallaciously allotted to Heaven rejected. Blake and Whitman have a common ground in their optimistic faith in America and democracy. Swift, on the other hand, provides the modifying view that extreme spiritual enthusiasm is as problematic as extreme rationalism. The web is a central positive symbol representing existential and transcendent unity in Whitman's poetry; conversely, Blake and Swift use it as a negative symbol for rationalist rejection of experiential and transcendent reality. The interaction between Bellow's allusions to Whitman and Swift reinforces the structure of the propositional sequence from upset equilibrium to restored equilibrium upon new terms. Bellow's game plan is to work both Swift and Whitman towards an equilibrium between a critical and an optimistic vision of human nature -- harmony between the illumination of intellect and imagination, matter and spirit.

The dialogue between Herzog and Swift is dominant in the framed main narrative but Whitman keeps visiting Herzog's imagination in glimpses of transcendental beauty, optimism, or unqualified universal acceptance, through Bellow's quotations of central images, motifs, or sentiments from *The Leaves of Grass*. Whitmanesque imagery is dominant in Bellow's description of Herzog's train journey to Martha's Vineyard. Herzog' consciousness shifts from the "wheels of the cars" which "stormed underneath," to "the enameled shells of the commuters' cars," to "tugboats moving in the swelling fabric-like water," to "pine [ ] needles on the ground of a life-giving russet colour," to the design of

> the universe …, the invisible magnetic spokes by means of which bodies kept one another in orbit. Astronomers made it all sound as though the gases were shaken up inside a flask. Then after many billions of years, light-years, this childlike but far from innocent creature, a straw hat on his head, and a heart in his breast, part pure, part wicked, who would try to form his own shaky picture of this magnificent web. (47-48)

In Herzog's recollection of Shapiro's visit to Ludeyville he recalls another intense "perception" of his natural surroundings and his "house of dull boards" while Shapiro, Madeleine, and Gersbach engage in intellectual exchange: "God's veil over things makes them all riddles" (72). Herzog's vision of his surroundings while waiting for the ferry to Martha's Vineyard recalls "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" as he looks "through the green darkness at the net of bright reflections on the bottom," takes in "the sun," the "light," the "purity of the air" and "the water," "greatly stirred"; "but principally by the green transparency as he looked down to the stony bottom webbed with golden lines. Never still. If his soul could cast a reflection so brilliant, and so intensely sweet, he might beg God to make such use of him. But that would be too simple. But that would be too childish. ... Death watches. So if you have some happiness, conceal it" (91-92). Bellow captures Whitman's recurring sentiment of the expansive feeling of brotherhood with the universal self of the masses in Herzog when he watches the crowds at Grand Central Station on his way to Ramona's, but Herzog resists the sentiment just as he resists the possibility of happiness and significant human contribution. Herzog's idea that the "shades" of writers of the past are as much with him as is his present reality captures Whitman's central argument in "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" that his spirit will transcend death as long as his poetry is read and remembered. Sono's involvement with the United Nations, her green sheets, her attentive recording of her surroundings echo some of Whitman's accents.

As the framed narrative progresses Herzog shows growing cognitive acceptance of human sentiments and transcendent beauty amidst decay and cold empty surfaces. He accepts by reasoning the realistic value of the intense beauty of the clean white surface of his sink emitting odours of decay when preparing to go to the New York courthouse, and the human concern of the judge whose trials he witnesses. Bellow's evocations of Whitman in the main narrative lend emphasis to the value of sensory, imaginative, and intuitive perception, as well as to hope and acceptance of humanity. The image of devouring as a healthy appetite for life and the world recurs in Whitman's poetry.

Swift plays a central role in *Herzog*. The main narrative in *Herzog* runs a close parallel in thematic development and use of language and imagery to four works by Swift: "A Tale of a Tub," "The Battel of the Books," and "A Discourse Concerning the Mechanical Operations of the Spirit, &c.," published together in 1704, and "A Tritical Essay upon the Faculties of the Mind." Herzog's satiric strategies, digressiveness, abrupt shifts from the sublime to the ridiculous or commonplace often resemble Swift's in his cultural criticism. In fact Swift's satires are so intricately woven into *Herzog* that a full treatment of the textual dialogue between them would have to be quite lengthy. A few examples will give an indication of the interconnectedness but the most enjoyable option is to read Swift's works with *Herzog* in mind; an ideal solution would be to publish them as supplements to the main text and double the enjoyment of reading. The most unusual feature in Bellow's textual and literary historical dialogue with Swift is that he constructs his narrative so that Swift's four satires as well as his "Meditation Upon a Broomstick" function as anachronistic critical explications of *Herzog*.

Swift's satire upon the mechanical operation of the spirit is a letter to *"T. H. Esquire, at his Chambers in the Academy of the Beaux Esprits in New-Holland"* (399). The letter throws comic light upon Bellow's use of Swift's spiritual manifestation in epistolary form in *Herzog* and has a special bearing upon Herzog's letter expressing his concern with the consequences of extreme faith in scientific thought. Swift's letter writer observes that the most common of the "Titles" he encountered while "coursing thro' *Westminster-Hall*, and *St. Paul's Church yard*, and *Fleet-street*" was:

> *A Letter to a Friend*: Nothing is more common than to meet with long Epistles address'd to Persons and Places, where, at first thinking, one would be apt to imagine it not altogether necessary or Convenient; Such as, *a Neighbour at next Door*, *a mortal Enemy*, *a perfect Stranger*, or *a Person*

> *of Quality in the Clouds;* and these upon Subjects, in appearance, the least proper for Conveyance by the Post; as, *long Schemes in Philosophy; dark and wonderful Mysteries of State; Laborious Dissertations in Criticism and Philosophy, Advice to Parliaments*, and the like. (399)

The letter writer gives an outline of the four different "Ways of ejaculating the Soul, or transporting it beyond the Sphere of Matter. The first, is the immediate Act of God, and is called, *Prophecy* or *Inspiration*. The second, is the immediate Act of the Devil, and is termed Possession. The third, is the Product of natural causes, the effect of strong Imagination, Spleen, violent Anger, Fear, Grief, Pain, and the like" (402). The fourth means of spiritual transportation is the *"Mechanical Operation of the Spirit."* Swift's satire upon Enthusiasm parallels what Herzog sees as a peculiarly contemporary trend towards trans-descendence, or the pursuit of an *"inspired condition ... in the negative"* by means of *"narcotics"* and *"crime,"* and the displacement of *"benevolence"* which has been absorbed by *"machines of production and transportation,"* as Herzog puts it (164). The comic parallels are obvious. Herzog experiences all four transportations of the spirit, the epistolary quiddities the letter writer notes aptly describes Herzog's letters, and Bellow's use of italics for Herzog's letters reinforce their similarity to Swift's. The Grub Street writer in "A Tale of a Tub" explains: "Whatever word or Sentence is Printed in a different character, shall be judged to contain something extraordinary either of Wit or Sublime" (287).

It seems that in *Herzog* Bellow accepted Swift's "Encouragement" in "A Tritical Essay" "for some able Pen to perform [ ] with more success" a satiric attack upon "Orators" who "flourish" the most in "Republicks" and "inflame the People, whose Anger is really but a short Fit of Madness" and by speaking against "Tyranny" produce "an Hundred" tyrants instead of one (425). Another passage in the "Tritical Essay" is pertinent to Bellow's resistance in *Herzog* of the demand for action rather than contemplation in realistic narrative. Swift's letter writer refers to *"Demosthenes* being asked, what was the first Part of an Orator," and he "replied, *Action:* What was the Second, *Action:* What was the Third, *Action:* And so on *ad infinitum*. This may be true in Oratory; but Contemplation, in other Things, exceeds Action. And, therefore, a wise Man is never less alone, than when he is alone" (425). The play upon meaning in the comment that "in Oratory, the greatest Art is to hide Art" also seems relevant both in context to Madeleine's subterfuge and the aesthetics Bellow flaunts in *Herzog*, on the one hand in exaggerated stylization of character and on the other by leaving all the terms necessary to define his art upon the very linguistic surface of his narrative (425).

Some of Bellow's allusions to Swift serve specifically to point to him through linguistic clues which acknowledge their similarity of authorial intent. Bellow's description of Herzog's "deadly polemics" which "often carried much spleen" when "[t]here was passionate satire in Herzog" calls attention to itself by his use of the archaic "spleen" in combination with satire; the writing of the Grub Street writer in "A Tale of a Tub" likewise suffers from spleen, according to himself (129). His narrative in places runs extremely close to *Herzog* in thematic concerns, imagery, and vocabulary. A more subtle clue pointing to Swift is Bellow's indirect report of Herzog's thoughts: "He knew ... the anatomy of a lobster's stomach" (224). A footnote to "The Battle of the Books" in the Norton Critical Edition of Swift's works provides the explanation that "[t]he hard calcareous structure in the stomach of a lobster" is "called a 'lady' from its resemblance to a seated female figure" (419, n 7). In the battle between the "Moderns" and the "Antients" Swift ridicules Dryden as one of the "Moderns" by describing his "Helmet" as "nine times too large for the Head" and shaped "like the Lady in a Lobster" (390). Bellow's linguistic clue seems insignificant until the obvious parallel between his treatment of clashes between modern and traditional values is taken into account.

As Bellow does in *Herzog*, Swift portrays two parallel battles in "The Battle of the Books," the one between library books in St. James' Library, and the other between a spider and a bee. The battle is "imputed" by some to be caused by "a great heap of *learned*

Dust, which a perverse Wind blew off from a Shelf of *Moderns* into the [library] *Keeper's* Eyes" so that he mixed up the books of the *"Antients"* and the *"Moderns"* who have little tolerance for one another (380). The spider had made a web,*"altogether out of [its] own person,"* in one corner of the library when a busy bee broke through it, earning a reproach full of obscenities from the spider for the destruction of its web (382). The bee responds that *"whatever I collect from"* flowers *"enriches my self, without the least Injury to their Beauty,"* whereas the spider produces *"Dirt"* from *"Sweepings"* below, *"one Insect furnishes"* it *"with a share of Poison to destroy another,"* and *"by an over-weening Pride, which feeding and engendering on it self"* it *"turns all into Excrement and Venom; producing nothing at last but Fly-Bane and a Cobweb"* (383). Aesop the fabulist finds the debate an apt parallel to that between the *"Antients"* and the *"Moderns":*

> *We are content with the* Bee, *to pretend to Nothing of our own, beyond our* Wings *and our* Voice: *that is to say, our* Flights *and our* Language; *For the rest, whatever we have got, has been by infinite Labour, and search, and ranging thro' every Corner of Nature: The difference is, that instead of* Dirt *and* Poison, *we have rather chose to fill our Hives with* Honey *and* Wax, *thus furnishing Mankind with the two Noblest of Things, which are* Sweetness *and* Light. (384-85)

In Bacons' "Magna Instauratio" he uses the bee to symbolize those who employ scientific methods for acquiring knowledge, the spider to symbolize those who employ the traditional method of research and reasoning and spin cobwebs out of their own substance which remain untested by experiment.

The spider web has taken on a variety of symbolic meanings since the inversion that occurred between Bacon and Swift. Blake has vast spiders chasing their prey over the abyss of analytical or rationalist thought where Leviathan resides in "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," and in "The Book of Urizen" the web represents the laws produced by reason alone -- by rational commands that become religion. Keats, on the other hand, lends an understanding to the web similar to the one Whitman later developed and expanded upon in many of his poems, most notably in "A Noiseless Patient Spider" but also, significantly, in "Song of Myself" where he weaves the song of himself. Keats says in a letter "To J. H. Reynolds" collected in *English Romantic Writers:*

> any Man may like the spider spin from his own inwards his own airy Citadel -- the points of leaves and twigs on which the Spiders begins her work are few and she fills the Air with a beautiful circuiting: man should be content with as few points to tip with the fine Webb of his Soul and weave a tapestry empyrean -- full of Symbols for his spiritual eye, of softness for his spiritual touch, of space for his wandering of distinctness for his Luxury ... Now it is more noble to sit like Jove than to fly like Mercury -- let us not therefore go hurrying about and collecting honey-bee like, buzzing here and there impatiently from a knowledge of what is to be arrived at.... (1211)

The image of the web figures largely in American writing, most likely due to the importance of Whitman and the associations between him and the extreme optimism for America that characterized both Romantic and Protestant thought, and the disillusionment that followed in its wake; a process which Herzog notes repeatedly in his narrative. But Jonathan Edwards also lent his slant to the symbol of the web in "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" where he compared man to a spider which God holds suspended over the pit of Hell and is prepared to let fall into the flames if angered. Modern American writers have taken a darker view of the web. In *All the King's Men* Robert Penn Warren, for instance, associates the web with the interconnectedness of existence and the consequences that arise from every action, especially Willie Stark's ambition and desire for power and success and everyone who became involved in his pursuit; the lightest touch ripples through the web, to its remotest perimeter, and the spider with its numbing poisonous sting is alerted. Thomas Wolfe also lends a dark hue to the web in *The Web and the Rock* where he associates the web with the stifling ties of experience, environment, and ancestry. And in "Design" Robert Frost raises the question whether the world is ruled by any design at all, and if so, whether it must not be by a power of an appalling darkness since it can lead a white moth to its death by a devouring spider.

The web carries all of these associations in *Herzog* and appears in such variations as the net, the veil, the fabric, the *beged* -- the garment, or the coat. As a spider web it refers to ideological constructs -- rationales and dictates -- as it does for Swift and Blake. When Ramona phones with her invitation for dinner and Herzog gets impatient with her Dionysian "lectures": "Herzog looked up at the ceiling. The spiders had the moldings under intensive cultivation, like the banks of the Rhine. Instead of grapes, encapsulated bugs hung in clusters" (152). Herzog describes Madeleine and Gersbach's designs against him: "They prepared a net for my steps. They digged a pit before me" (203). The designs he suspects Ramona has upon him, to become his wife, Herzog sees as "a union that really unified. Tables, beds, parlors, money, laundry and automobile, culture and sex, knit into one web" (185). When Herzog was working on his chapter on "'Romantics and Enthusiasts'" while married to Daisy, "fitt[ing] together Bacon and Locke from one side and Methodism and William Blake from the other" his neighbours were "the clergyman, Mr. Idwal" and his wife, his friends "until the minister started to give him testimonials by orthodox rabbis who had embraced the Christian faith" (127-28). Bellow connects the religious designs upon Herzog with Blake's understanding of the web when he describes Mrs. Idwal with "the spidery design of lace curtains thrown on her face by sunlight" (127). The web is a reminder of death when Herzog recalls the old men in the baths in his childhood: "with webby eyes nearly blind" (131).

Except for Herzog's image of the webby bottom of the Atlantic ocean when waiting for the ferry, the effect of which he suppresses, the web invariably has negative associations until he comes to the recognition in the courtroom in New York:

> Evidently I continue to believe in God. Though never admitting it. But what else explains my conduct and my life? ... My behavior implies that

> there is a barrier against which I have been pressing from the first, pressing all my life, with the conviction that it is necessary to press, and that something must come of it. Perhaps that I can eventually pass through. I must always have had such an idea. Is it faith? (231)

Herzog later envisions modern man as a "web of feeling intricacies and ideas" and his marriage to Madeleine as a mysterious design: "'There's a red thread spliced with a green, or blue, and I wonder why'" (265, 305). Eventually the web and the "barrier" unite with Nietzsche's idea of the veil of Maya which, if penetrated, simply shows another veil, and another, and another, endlessly, because there is no transcendent reality. Herzog's parting words to Nietzsche are: *"Yours, under the veil of Maya, M. E. H."* (320). Herzog describes the peace he enjoys after composing his final letter, the one to God, and before composing the message he wanted to send his mother: "This rest and well-being were only a momentary difference in the strange lining or variable silk between life and void" (326). The lining ties in with the garment of appearances with all the different significations Bellow develops around it: the body and the world of matter, deception, construction of self-images, ideological constructs, things and blocks of concrete. And it also ties in with Swift's narrative in "A Tale of a Tub" of the three brothers whose father left them his coat, seamless and all of a piece, with the instructions that it was never to be altered, their failure to adhere to his instructions, and their inversion of the inner and the outer man by deciding that the outer garment is the soul.

The symbol of the web eventually expands to include all textual aspects of *Herzog*. The web captures in historical context the central conflict Bellow develops between the nihilist consequences of scientific thought and the various human and cultural values: literary, philosophical, religious, and democratic. Weaving in *Herzog* also refers to language which takes on all the connotations of the garment of appearances. When Herzog describes the motivation behind his letters, the image he constructs of language as the means "to force Madeleine and Gersbach to have a *Conscience*" is similar to a web: "I want them in human form, and so I conjure up a whole environment and catch them in the middle" (272). Bellow organizes his chapters so that the structural center occurs in chapter five, the central chapter, and the structural threads are enclosed within a framing narrative. And all narrative elements in *Herzog* are carefully woven together in a tight seamless text. The etymological roots of the word 'text' go back to the Indo-European *tekthere*, to plait. In Latin it is *texere*, to weave, and *textus* refers to the style or texture of a work, corresponding to the Greek word *téchne*, or art, skill, craft. The Medieval Latin *textus* refers to the Scriptures but in the fourteenth century the word 'text' was introduced into English from the French *texte*, meaning an 'account,' 'treatise,' 'document.' The variant 'textuel' means 'well read.'[6] *Herzog* calls for consideration of all of these different denotations of the textual web to account for its construction.

Bellow restores equilibrium and traditional values -- literary, philosophical, religious, and democratic -- through his allusions to Whitman and Swift. The reconstruction occurs outside the confines of the structural web. In the opening of *Herzog* Bellow alludes to lines in "Song of Myself" which depart from the poem's dominant acceptance of humanity when he has Herzog sharing his house with animals: "He could share with rats too" (2). Whitman says:

> I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-
>   contain'd, I stand and look at them long and long.
> They do not sweat and whine about their condition,
> They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins,
> They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,
> Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the mania of owning
>   things,

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[6] For the etymological tracing of 'text' see: Robert K. Barnhart, ed. *The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology*, (New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1988) 1129.

> Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that liveth thousands of years
> ago,
> Not one is respectable or unhappy over the whole earth. (32, 684-91)

The American spirit of optimism for humanity is depleted, Swift's ideals of "sweetness and light," indicated by the "paraffin-sealed preserves" and "candles," have been spoiled by "mice," and Herzog's estate is in general disrepair and neglect because he had "abandoned" his house with books, appliances, and Madeleine's shed garments "to the spiders, the moles, and the field mice" (1, 6). And Herzog sees the "shadow of his" "weirdly tranquil" "face in" a "gray, webby window" (2).

In his restoration of order in Herzog's life, Bellow carefully reaffirms through symbols the traditional values that sustain and selects through allusion the relevant accents from his representatives for optimism and pessimism to restore balance. Bellow argues through his narrative development that there is a certain constancy in human nature even if there are shifts in the weight of optimism as opposed to pessimism and other outward manifestations of the bent in thought at a given time. The recurrence of the symbol of the web and the pit that sometimes accompanies it suggests a continuity in the imagination that precedes the existential idea of the Void and the shifts from positive to negative connotations indicate shifts in cultural emphasis. By keeping close in thematic development to Swift's satires and yet remaining altogether within the contemporary context, Bellow stresses the continuity in cultural concerns despite a time difference of about two hundred and sixty years. He uses Herzog's bottle of wine, which has lost its label and is clear instead of green as his father's bottles were during his bootlegging years, to indicate the constancy of the human spirit and the changes in its manifestation in matter. The green colour is highly significant and refers to contemporary loss of hope and faith in the life of the human spirit and creative inspiration, as well as the green hopes for American democracy that Whitman celebrated with the green of grass. Herzog recovers these values, first by "let[ting] the fiery claw of the imagination take up the green brush" and then by picking flowers for Ramona's visit (325). His decision not to worry how Ramona may interpret his considerate gesture affirms his Independence, his own heeding of inner Truth instead of appearances, and his willingness to show Goodness by sharing the Beauty and fleeting Life of the flowers and thereby allow himself and an other Happiness; flowers and candles -- Sweetness and Light. The restoration of light is also evident in Herzog's recovery from his spell and is reinforced when "the master spirit of Ludeyville" turns on the electricity (334). Herzog recovers the traditional aims in literature, philosophy, religion, and American democracy lost in the cultural crisis of the middle class.

The circular closure through the motif of the opening sentence within the narrative frame closes the structural pattern of the vicious circle and the narrative web which Herzog breaks away from, like the busy bee gathering sweetness and light in "The Battle of the Books." Mrs. Tuttle with her broom comically enacts lines which Bellow leaves out of the nursery rhyme about the "old woman/ Who flew in a basket," carrying a "broom" and "Nobody could tell" where she was going (52). Iona and Peter Opie's *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes* provides the clue: "Old woman, old woman, old woman, quoth I,/ Where are you going up so high?/ To brush off the cobwebs off the sky!/ May I go with you?/ Ay, by-and-by" (434). Mrs. Tuttle is also a comic reenactment of the motif of the day-and-night aspect from the Wife of Bath's chivalric tale because she is dressed for both day and night, wearing "tennis shoes and, under her dress, the edge of her nightgown showed" (335). Bellow's dismissal of the web through Mrs. Tuttle's cleaning of cobwebs and dirt evokes Herzog's recollection early in the narrative of lines from the Bible: *"Consider the lilies of the field ... They toil not, neither do they spin ..."* (22). Bellow's dismantling of the thematic and structural symbol of the web and its associations with control, symmetry, lies, ties, binary division between spirit and matter and rejection of either -- between spirit and body and rejection of either or both -- is thus manifold. His symbolic use of the wine bottle to dismiss false and insignificant labels also serves to comment on content and form by reference to the Bible where it says that people should not put new wine into old bottles, but put them in new. Bellow's variation is that the old spirit and inspiration can easily enter new bottles -- as they do in his narrative. But above all, form has to cohere with content and be a part of content as the verse in the Bible underlines.

Bellow sets the final tone for a more balanced attitude by selecting allusions from Whitman and Swift which brings them as close together in tone as possible to comment upon his narrative. He selects a quiet introspective allusion to Whitman which corresponds ironically but most appropriately to another of his poems as commentary upon Herzog. Herzog writes to the one character he decides to abhor with utter relish in the conclusion, Dr. Waldemar Zozo: "I am really in an unusually free condition of mind. 'In paths untrodden,' as Walt Whitman marvellously put it, 'Escaped from the life that exhibits itself'" (324). The poem affirms in particular man's need for comrades and Bellow selects this type of personal brotherhood which Herzog finds with both Willie his brother and Ramona, but rejects as "potato-love" Whitman's all expansive universal feeling of oneness with a general idea of Mankind. Another of Whitman's poems which also mentions "the life that exhibits itself" has an ironic bearing upon Herzog but expresses the very main thrust of Bellow's argument through character, language, and form:

To a Historian

You who celebrate bygones,
Who have explored the outward, the surfaces of the races, the life that has
    exhibited itself,
Who have treated of man as the creature of politics, aggregates, rulers and
    priests,
I, habitan of the Alleghanies, treating of him as he is in himself in his own
    rights,
Pressing the pulse of the life that has seldom exhibited itself, (the great pride
    of man in himself,)

> Chanter of Personality, outlining what is yet to be, I project the history of
> the future.

Bellow's allusion to Swift also provides commentary on the narrative. Swift's definition of the function of literature being to bring "sweetness and light," which Bellow selects as its appropriate aim, seems somewhat at odds with most of Swift's writing -- the "sweetness" at least. But "A Meditation Upon a Broomstick" has a tone of generous and whimsical tolerance towards mankind that differs from Swift's other works. The meditation which compares man to a "broomstick" comments ironically upon literature in comparison to reality and upon Bellow's use of satire -- but above all it provides an excellent narrative summary of *Herzog:*

> This single Stick, which you now behold ingloriously lying in that neglected Corner, I once knew in a flourishing State in a Forest: It was full of Sap, full of Leaves, and full of boughs: But now, in vain does the busy Art of Man pretend to vye with Nature, by tying that withered bundle of Twigs to its sapless Trunk: It is now at best but the Reverse of what it was; a Tree turned upside down .... [W]hat is Man but a topsy-turvy Creature? His Animal Faculties perpetually mounted on his Rational; his head where his Heels should be, groveling on the Earth. And yet, with all his Faults, he sets up to be a universal Reformer and Correcter of Abuses; a Remover of Grievances; rakes into every Slut's Corner of Nature, bringing hidden Corruptions to the Light, and raiseth a mighty Dust where there was none before; sharing deeply all the while in the very same Pollutions he pretends to sweep away. His last Days are spent in slavery to women, and generally the least deserving; till worn to the stumps, like his Brother *Bezom*, he is either kicked out of doors, or made use of to kindle Flames for others to warm themselves by. (421-22)

Herzog is Bellow's most elaborately constructed novel; despite its deceptive appearances of looseness and lack of artifact it is in fact more elaborately constructed and tightly controlled than most novels. But Bellow uses the extremely elaborate design essentially to argue against preference for elaborate designs to the exclusion of faithful and honest concern with human nature and values, showing it as one of the symptoms of thought that devalues man, intellect, spirit, democracy, and the novel.

Conclusion

ONLY THE BEST IDEAS

The first step in criticism that aspires to allow the voice of the text that it examines to sound through as clearly as possible in the analysis is to recognize the intentions inscribed upon the work itself instead of demanding that the work adhere to the intentions of the critic, even if critical misreadings are an inescapable fact. The very act of getting a literary text published signals the author's determination to enter a dialogue with his culture. But every genre and every text sets its own terms for the kind of dialogue conducted. Criticism is a part of this dialogue and intentionality has indeed proved a central issue in criticism as commentary on novels of ideas attests. Complaints that novels of ideas fail to fully realize fictional autonomy, unity, fully rounded characters and other aspects of verisimilitude clearly demonstrate the intentions the critic anticipated from the text. Likewise, complaints that novels of ideas fail to privilege social action, fail to work out the kind of solution that a thesis novel would, and pronouncements that novels of ideas are actually essays or tracts, in all of these instances the rhetorical intent of the novels in question are recognized -- but without accepting the specific rhetorical terms the texts themselves set. Approaches that make demands upon the text that differ from its intentions can be highly useful in the sense that they can highlight the departures from the norms being applied. But it is not enough to record the departures; the nature of these departures also needs to be looked into.

The author of a novel of ideas intends his narrative to work upon two planes simultaneously: to function as a narrative complete in itself and to function as cultural commentary which addresses the roots, the nature, and the formal manifestation of contemporary ideas through an interaction between elements immediately accessible through the surface structure and the authorial accents of the deep structure. Analysis and assessment of contemporary cultural values regarded as invidious by the novelist are central to novels of ideas. Thus in order to test the value system the novelist allows it to unfold and its hierachization to emerge as faithfully as possible. The authorial intention to interrupt and undermine the domination of accepted ideological trends is carried out on the one hand by analyzing and demonstrating their implications in the surface structure and on the other by accentuating their distortions in the deep structure. The author's management of form and language is therefore an integral part and sometimes the most important part of the signification of the text which sets out to restore balance, harmony, either entirely by the negative means of stressing extreme imbalance to such an extent that the need for greater equilibrium becomes obvious, or by restoring balance on different terms, yet without proffering an ideal solution to the problems in the surface structure. Recognition of these particular rhetorical peculiarities in novels of ideas is a necessary preliminary for an understanding of them on their own generic terms.

The narrative methods in the individual texts vary, of course, but certain features may be expected. Narrative layering and a rich variety of different speaking voices, of different narrative methods, and of generic mixtures are frequently used in novels of ideas to bring in alternative perspectives upon the central ideas. But a single voice can also be used to establish different perspectives. Stylization and exaggeration as well as contrapuntal patterning of variations and inversions are likely to occur in depiction and development of character as a means to expose their codes of values; unsettling of language can serve the same ends. The author may elicit sympathy for characters who are also shown in an unsympathetic light and play the effect of their narrowness against their depth; the grotesque is particularly effective as a means to establish this kind of double vision and dismantle false divisions.

The amazing fact that a great deal of Bellow's management of form in *Herzog* has gone undetected after nearly twenty years of quite extensive critical examination clearly supports the complaint stated most clearly by Doris Lessing that the most important aspects of the artistry and formal rhetoric of a novel of ideas are likely to go unnoticed. *Herzog* is an encyclopedia of ideas, of character, of contemporary critical assumptions, of forms. Bellow's capacity to combine all of these seamlessly enough so that they can go undetected is remarkable. *Herzog* is a readable novel of lasting literary quality, even if the debate on existential nihilism and the debate on the specific literary dictates which to a great extent inform the novel have yielded to time and different trends in thought and taste. Deprived of its topicality Bellow's rhetoric still functions to persuade readers of the importance of cultural and individual values, to invite the reader to enjoy the play of language, meaning, and form in the novel. *Herzog* combines many narratives within one and can therefore be read at different levels of complexity. My readings of Bellow's intentions in the novel are no doubt as likely to be partial misreadings as other readings of *Herzog* but my indentification of his narrative strategies and control I firmly believe in.

Novels of ideas which rely heavily upon the rhetoric of formal components to interrupt contemporary formal trends as they relate to ideological trends are particularly vulnerable to misrepresentations in criticism, precisely because they do not play according to known rules. Herzog is a novel which inscribes its own deep structure upon the surface structure; which anticipates Derrida on one particular type of deconstruction -- not only to dismantle and decenter but to recenter and reconstruct as well; it is a novel written so that a part of its critical explication was written about two hundred and sixty years earlier; and it is a novel which affirms the capacity of the novel to both uncover and retain human mystery by being constructed like a game of mystery that is partly discoverable. The best way to solve additional narrative clues in *Herzog* is undoubtedly to approach it from the formal perspective of a novel of ideas. Bellow uses the encyclopedic form of *Herzog* rhetorically, to reason and argue in precisely the manner peculiar to narrative, as opposed to intellectual debate. Bellow highlights the vitality, the wealth, the dead ends, and the alternative options that are available within the tradition of novelistic character and forms; he argues in the best way possible: by novelistic demonstration.

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